D. Lyman to his Friend
J. Harriott

POEMS,

DRAMATIC AND MISCELLANEOUS.

BY MRS. M. WARREN.

——————'Tis a ſtranger ſues,
A virgin tragedy, an orphan muſe.——POPE.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

GEORGE WASHINGTON,

PRESIDENT

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

SIR,

AMBITIOUS to avoid both the ſtyle and the ſentiment of common dedication, more frequently the incenſe of adulation, than the reſult of truth, I only aſk the illuſtrious Waſhington to permit a lady of his acquaintance, to introduce to the public, under his patronage, a ſmall volume, written as the amuſement of ſolitude, at a period when every active member of ſociety was engaged, either in the field, or the cabinet, to reſiſt the ſtrong hand of foreign domination.

THE

THE approbation of one who has united all hearts in the field of conqueſt, in the lap of peace, and at the head of the government of the United States, muſt, for a time, give countenance to a writer, who, claiming the honour of private friendſhip, hopes for this indulgence: But it muſt be a bold adventurer in the paths of literature, who dreams of fame, in any degree commenſurate with the duration of laurels reaped by an hero, who has led the armies of America to glory, victory and independence.

THIS may, perhaps, be an improper place to make many obſervations on a revolution, that may eventually ſhake the proud ſyſtems of European deſpotiſm; yet you, ſir, (who have borne ſuch a diſtinguiſhed and honourable part in the great conflict, till the

the nations, wearied with ſlaughter, gave truce to the miſeries of man) will permit me to obſerve, that, connected by conſanguinity, or friendſhip, with many of the principal characters who aſſerted and defended the rights of an injured country, the mind has been naturally led to contemplate the magnitude, both of the cauſes and the conſequences, of a convulſion that has been felt from the eaſtern borders of the Atlantic, to the weſtern wilds.

FEELING much for the diſtreſſes of America, in the dark days of her affliction, a faithful record has been kept, of the moſt material tranſactions, through a period that has engaged the attention, both of the philoſopher and the politician; and, if life is ſpared, a juſt trait of the moſt diſtinguiſhed

characters, either for valour, virtue, or patriotism; for perfidy, intrigue, inconfiſtency, or ingratitude, ſhall be faithfully tranſmitted to poſterity, by one, who unites in the general wiſh, that you, ſir, may continue to preſide in the midſt of your brethren, until nature aſks the aid of retirement and repoſe, to tranquilize the laſt ſtages of human life.

With every ſentiment of eſteem and friendſhip, I am, reſpected Sir,

The Preſident's

Moſt obedient,

And very humble ſervant,

M. WARREN.

Plymouth, Maſſachuſetts,
March 20, 1790.

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TO

TO THE PUBLIC.

ALMOST every page of the ſtory of Rome, exhibits a tragedy, without the exaggeration of poetic fiction; *yet there are few of its intereſting ſcenes, that have not furniſhed the machinery for ſome dramatic work. But, amidſt the innumerable writers, that almoſt every age has produced, the author of a piece, now offered the public, does not recollect to have ſeen the weakneſs and cruelty of* Valentinian—*the character of* Petronius Maximus—*the reſentment, indiſcretion and revenge of* Edoxia—*(the more immediate cauſes of the invaſion of the imperial city, by the Vandals)*—*choſen for the ſubject of theatrical inſtruction.*

The ſubverſion of the weſtern empire, and the Sack of the city of Rome, by Genſeric, *form an era in the revolution of human affairs, that ſtrikes the mind with peculiar ſolemnity: Perhaps, at that period, the character of man was ſunk to the loweſt ſtage of depravity. Debilitated by the habits of every ſpecies of luxury, a long ſeries of tragical events, and the continual apprehenſions of proſcription, or death; the powers of*

the

the mind were, at the same time, obscured by the superstitions of weak, uninformed christians, blended with the barbarism and ignorance of the darker ages.

Thus an impenetrable cloud was thrown over the religious and political institutions, both of the Roman and the Gothic world; which hastened on the destruction of the former, without exhibiting any thing more honourable to the genius and virtue of mankind, in the establishment of the latter; nor have more enlightened and polished ages been taught, by their examples, to shun the luxurious vices, or the absurd systems of policy, which have frequently corrupted, distracted, and ruined the best constituted republics; as well as divided and overturned the strong fabric of monarchic government.

In tracing the rise, the character, the revolutions, and the fall of the most politic and brave, the most insolent and selfish people, the world ever exhibited, the hero and the moralist may find the most sublime examples of valour and virtue; and the philosopher the most humiliating lessons to the pride of man, in the turpitude of some of their capital characters: While the extensive dominions of that once celebrated nation, their haugh-

by uſurpations and ſplendid crimes, have for ages furniſhed the hiſtorian and the poet with a field of ſpeculation, adapted to his own peculiar talents. But if the writer of the Sack of Rome *has miſtaken her's, ſhe will, doubtleſs, be forgiven, as there have been inſtances of men of the beſt abilities who have fallen into the ſame error.*

There is but little mixture of fable in the narration, and, I hope, a juſt purity of ſtile has been obſerved, while the writer has aimed at moral improvement, by an exhibition of the tumult and miſery into which mankind are often plunged by an unwarrantable indulgence of the diſcordant paſſions of the human mind.

Theatrical amuſements may, ſometimes, have been proſtituted to the purpoſes of vice; yet, in an age of taſte and refinement, leſſons of morality, and the conſequences of deviation, may perhaps, be as ſucceſsfully enforced from the ſtage, as by modes of inſtruction, leſs cenſured by the ſevere; while, at the ſame time, the exhibition of great hiſtorical events, opens a field of contemplation to the reflecting and philoſophic mind.

My

My firſt wiſh is to throw a mite into the ſcale of virtue, and my higheſt ambition to meet the approbation of the judicious and worthy:—In the one, I am gratified from the reflections of my own heart; for the other, I wait with diffidence the determinations of the candid public.

M. W.

ERRATA.—The reader is requeſted to notice the following *alterations* and *errors of the preſs*, viz.

Page 39, line 4 from top, for *ſceptres*, read *ſpectres*.
46——5 from bottom, for *Hermannic*, read *Hermanric*.
56——7 from bottom, for *ghoſt*, read *ſhade*.
67——4 from top, for *him who thunders in the ſkies*, read *all the deities of Rome*.
96——3 from top, for *an*, read *a*.
110——3 from bottom, for *ſignet*, read *ſignal*.
157——6 from bottom, for *amour*, read *armour*.
161——15 from top, for *for probity*, read *my probity*.
203——7 from top, for *Tilans*, read *Titans*.
212——13 from top, for *throw*, read *throwe*.

THE

THE

SACK of ROME.

A

TRAGEDY,

IN

FIVE ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

VALENTINIAN—*Emperor of Rome.*

HERACLIUS—*favourite Eunuch to Valentinian.*

PETRONIUS MAXIMUS—*a noble Citizen.*

ÆTIUS—*Commander of the Roman Troops.*

GAUDENTIUS—*Son to Ætius, betrothed to Eudocia.*

LEO—*Bishop of Rome.*

GENSERIC—*King of the Vandals, reigning in Carthage.*

HUNNERIC—*Son to Genseric.*

TRAULISTA—*a barbarian Prince.*

WOMEN.

EDOXIA—*Empress of Rome.*

EUDOCIA—
PLACIDIA— } *Daughters of Valentinian.*

SENATORS, SOLDIERS, SERVANTS, &c. &c.

THE

SACK of ROME.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Camp near Rome.

ÆTIUS *and* GAUDENTIUS.

ÆTIUS.

A SOLEMN ſtillneſs reigns throughout the camp;
The hoſtile ſound of martial muſick's huſh'd;
A truce agreed, the proud Attila gives,
Perhaps, a ſhort liv'd peace to bleeding Rome:
But nations pouring from their frozen dens,
Rough, naked boors, from every northern wild,
Untutor'd, or by nature, or by art,
With ſcarce a trait that ſpeaks the ſpecies man,
Except the ſemblance of the human form,
Muſt be the choſen ſcourge, by heaven deſign'd,
To chaſten Rome for that tyrannick ſway
Uſurp'd and ſtretch'd o'er all her wide domain,
And proudly held by her remorſeleſs ſword;

Her-

Her inſolence, her ſtubbornneſs of ſoul,
That trod down nations, trampled on the necks
Of mighty kings, and taught her weaker foes
To fear alike her ſenators and gods.

GAUDENTIUS.

Though from each quarter of the peopled globe
Some hoſtile foe, or new invader riſe,
Imperial Rome muſt ever awe the world.

ÆTIUS.

With hideous ſhouts the northern hords retir'd
O'er the bleak mounts to Sogdiana's wilds;
But fierce Attila look'd indignant back
On weaken'd Rome, by luxury undone;
Fluſh'd with ſucceſs, by vulgar kings ador'd,
Who watch his nod and tremble at his frown,
The Scythian ſavage left the Latian ſhore,
Like ſome wild beaſt juſt gorg'd with human blood,
Full glutted with his prey, to breathe awhile
In his ferocious den—to whet his taſte
For new refreſhing hecatombs of blood.

GAUDENTIUS.

Extreme diſtreſs unites the firm and brave;
True virtue might each obſtacle ſurmount;
Rome, like a phenix, from her ſmoking towns,
Diſſolving columns, cities wrapt in flames,
Might yet emerge and more illuſtrious ſhine,
If party rage and luxury ſhould ceaſe,
And peace give time to make a juſt reform
Through each corrupted channel of the law;
Or if ſimplicity again returns,
And government more energy aſſumes,
Her ancient codes reſtor'd on equal terms,
She yet might reign from Danube to the Po.

There's

ÆTIUS.

There's little hope from ſuch a noble ſource;
So chang'd her manners, ſo debas'd the mind
By faction, pride, intemperance and luſt.
Loſt in inglorious eaſe, all valour melts
Beneath incruſted roofs, emboſs'd with gold,
Egyptian pearls and emeralds of the Eaſt.
The ſword alone is all that Rome can boaſt
That bears affinity to former fame;
Yet ſee the ſons of Romulus diſmay'd,
The trembling youth of Italy alarm'd
Whene'er the trumpet ſummons to the field.
Before the vernal equinox returns
To cheer the Hetrurian plains, war wakes anew;
I ſaw the tyger gnaſh his hungry teeth
When fair Honoria's ample dower was nam'd,
On which the ſavage ſtipulated peace;
This brings him back to claim his royal bride.

GAUDENTIUS.

But while tranſported with the youthful charms
Of beauteous Elda—taken to his bed;
Amidſt barbarick pomp—he may forget
Both enmity and gold and his Honoria,
Till Rome's prepar'd to meet him in the field. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

ÆTIUS—LEO—GAUDENTIUS.

LEO.

I COME my lord with tidings on my tongue.

ÆTIUS.

Say, what new foe has Rome? I am prepar'd.

LEO.

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That trod down nations, trampled on the necks
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LEO.

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ÆTIUS.

Say, what new foe has Rome? I am prepar'd.

LEO.

LEO.

I come to hail the valiant friend of Rome,
Whose arm and prowess are her best support,
With the glad news of fierce Attila's death.

ÆTIUS.

How did the monster fall?

LEO.

Hot from the riot of a barbarous feast;
Sent swiftly down to Pluto's gloomy shade,
By lewd debauch and great excess of joy
That his rough arm had humbled haughty Rome.

ÆTIUS.

Humbled indeed! the world's proud mistress
Trembles at th' approach of Suevick valour;
The harden'd lance dip'd in the Wolga's stream;
Hurl'd in the face of her degenerate sons;
They start appall'd e'en at a distant foe;
The next invader seals Rome's heavy doom.

LEO.

Though weaken'd Rome by furious factions torn,
Imbitter'd by decline, sinks deep in vice—
Yet, was the empire held in bolder hands
The fierce barbarick rage might still be check'd:
Within Liguria all would be secure,
And sav'd from pillage all the Latian states;
Then let the world beyond the towering Alps
Be still possess'd by Goth, or Vandal tribes,
Ravag'd by wolves, or yet more savage Huns.

ÆTIUS.

Where is the emperor? Does he not awake
From his soft slumbering lethargy of soul?

LEO.

LEO.

Supinely ſunk in dreams of wanton bliſs,
Ignoble pleaſures of a ſplendid court,
Or peace, or war, or truce, the ſame to him.

ÆTIUS.

Yet, when he heard of the barbarian's death,
Did he not rouſe, nor dread the ill omen'd birds
That late have brooded o'er the capitol,
And augur'd evils round the city walls,
That the twelve centuries were near complete,
Since Romulus the founder of the ſtate
Had propheſied the meaſure of her guilt
Would tempt the deſtinies in wrath to riſe
And ſhake the empire from its ancient baſe?

LEO.

The fair Ardelia fills the monarch's heart:
He ſecret ſighs for Maximus's wife.

ÆTIUS.

Ardelia!—the good—the chaſte Ardelia—
The firſt and faireſt matron left in Rome!

LEO.

To triumph over her ſuperiour charms,
He cog'd the dye at Maximus's coſt:
Long practis'd in the tercerarian art,
Petronius is play'd a double game;
The die was thrown while fortune turn'd the wheel
That makes him wretched as he has been bleſs'd.

ÆTIUS.

'Mongſt the long liſt of celebrated names,
Matrons of ancient or of modern fame,
None boaſts a fairer claim to virtue's palm
Than the diſcreet, the excellent Ardelia;
Nor can ſhe forfeit by a ſhameful fall

That

That modeſty, and grace, and decent pride,
That dignifies, nor leſs adorns, the ſex.

LEO.

Yet heavenly virtue, or angelick worth,
May fall the victim of a wanton wiſh,
When power lends its iron hand to guilt.

ÆTIUS.

Petronius ador'd Ardelia's charms.

LEO.

As well he ought—though innocent as fair,
Pity's too weak her anguiſh to expreſs—
Language too poor to ſpeak one half her griefs:
But Maximus returns—Ah, hapleſs man!
I would not ſee him till he knows his fate,
And time has calm'd the tumults of his ſoul.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

ÆTIUS—MAXIMUS.

ÆTIUS.

HAH! Maximus—
Art thou the laſt to hail thy friend's ſucceſs?
Or has long abſence blotted friendſhip out?

MAXIMUS.

Forgive me, Ætius—
I eſteem thy virtues—nor envy thee
The laurels thou haſt won: Abſence, nor time,
Can e'er obliterate that love, that friendſhip,
Merit makes thy own, and worth commands:

Give

Give me thy hand—thou know'ſt my heart is thine,
Nor can I more until we meet again.

ÆTIUS.

What means this haſte? Why that diſturbed brow?

MAXIMUS.

Return'd this moment from the Aquilean camp
Where I've been ſent with ſuch impetuous ſpeed,
So much unlike the flowneſs of the emperor,
I ſcarce believe that he could mean me fair.

ÆTIUS.

What cauſe is there for doubt? or why ſuſpect?

MAXIMUS.

I think ſome latent miſchief lies conceal'd
Beneath the vizard of a fair pretence;
My heart ill brook'd the errand of the day,
Yet I obey'd—though a ſtrange horror ſeiz'd
My gloomy mind—and ſhook my frame
As if the moment murder'd all my joys.

ÆTIUS.

But what excites diſtruſt?

MAXIMUS.

Not like a child am I about to weave
In piteous accents a ſad tale of woe:
But if I'm bubbled by a mean device,
No lingering vengeance ſhall repair my wrongs.

ÆTIUS.

What mean theſe fears? this agony of doubt?

MAXIMUS.

Thou art a gen'rous and a valiant friend:
I'll not conceal the anguiſh of my ſoul,
Nor yet the ſecret worm that gnaws my heart.
Myſelf forgot in an ignoble vice,

A vice below the dignity of man,
Without temptation but in avarice,
A blacker paſſion ſtill—fate threw the die,
Or by ſuperiour ſkill the emperor won
My beauteous grottos—my paternal groves—
My pleaſant villas—and, meandering ſtreams—
The ſweet caſcades that gurgled o'er the dales—
The noble buſts that mark'd th' Anician name—
My poplar walks—and my Ardelia's bower—
(Thoſe ſoft retreats of innocence and love)
And thus for once made Maximus a ſlave.
But ah! he gave a treacherous releaſe;
He only aſk'd the ſignet from my hand
To ſeal a promiſe that I'd reach the camp
Where Accimer commands before the eve;
But 'twas a poor, a frivolous pretence;
Yet did I not ſuſpect a baſe deſign,
Till I receiv'd, without a ſignature,
In characters familiar to my eye,
A ſentence like a thunderbolt from Jove.
I kiſs'd the hand—in raptures broke the ſeal—
"Read—tremble—and deſpair—adieu, Petronius!"
Was all the page—the ſolemn page, contain'd;
And now I haſte to find my lov'd Ardelia;
If ſhe's not wrong'd, Petronius Maximus
May ſtill be bleſs'd.

ÆTIUS.

Though Valentinian doats on beauty's charms,
Ardelia muſt be ſafe: True virtue checks
A bold licentious wiſh, and guards the fair;
He durſt not drag an angel to his bed.

MAXIMUS.

As truth and virtue digniſi'd my bliſs,
The gods alone who judge of ſpotleſs worth,

Muſt

Muſt clear her fame, and vindicate my own;
Or let their vengeance pour in dreadful peals,
Their heated bolts—till chaſtis'd curſes fall,
In blaſts diſtinguiſh'd, on the emperor's head.

[Exeunt.

SCENE IV.

ÆTIUS—GAUDENTIUS—HERACLIUS.

ÆTIUS.

HERACLIUS!—Say, what has brought thee hither?

HERACLIUS.

The emperor's command—he, on the tide
Of pleaſure and ſucceſs, congratulates,
Both on the peace, and on Attila's death,
The brave Gaudentius, and his noble ſire;
He greets with thanks, his hardy, veteran friends,
For valour, faith, and every great exploit
Their arms atchiev'd in the rough field of Mars.
When Ætius finds it ſafe to leave the camp,
It is his will ye both repair to Rome,
To reſt awhile from toilſome ſcenes of war,
And taſte the pleaſures of the imperial court.

ÆTIUS.

We ſhall obey—and ere tomorrow's dawn,
I reach the city and ſalute my prince.
But whence that ſigh, my ſon? Art thou afraid *(to Gaud.)*
To venture on the threſhold of a court,
Leſt it melt down thy valour or thy fame?

Or

Or does ſoft hope preſent th' hymenial torch,
Rekindle in thy breaſt a lover's flame,
And bring the fair Eudocia to thine eye?
Thy valour claims her from the emperor's hand,
Nor will he longer now protract his vow.

GAUDENTIUS.

Nor ſhall he—Eudocia is my wife—
A ſoldier's honour reſts upon his ſword,
And mine ſhall claim its right.

HERACLIUS.

He gives Eudocia to thy longing arms,
And bids thee haſte to ſolemnize thy love,
In feſtal joys and holy nuptial rites.

GAUDENTIUS.

Thou art the harbinger of bliſs indeed;
Command my gratitude, it ſhall be thine:
I'll haſten on, and meet thee in the forum;
If yet thou haſt one wiſh ungratified,
Command my aid—it ſhall enſure ſucceſs,
Complete thy fortune, and fill up thy hopes.

HERACLIUS.

The princeſs waits impatiently to hear
The happy moment of her lord's return.

[*Exit* HERACLIUS.

ÆTIUS.

There's not a prince in Valentinian's court
Has ſerv'd with more fidelity and zeal;
Nor does he ſlight the ſervices of Ætius,
But as a prince he bounteouſly rewards.
My ſon! the braveſt, moſt deſerving youth
That e'er paternal love claſp'd to his breaſt,
He crowns thy valour with the choiceſt gift
A lover ever wiſh'd, or hero claim'd.

Yet

Yet while my heart anticipates thy bliſs,
Thou muſt remember that thou liv'ſt for Rome:
Let not ambition, avarice, or love,
Contaminate thy patriotick worth:
And as my ſword has ſav'd the commonwealth,
Drove back her foes, and given peace to Rome,
Let thine example teach her to be free.

GAUDENTIUS.

Inſpir'd by thee, by glory, and by fame,
No deed of mine ſhall ever ſtain thy name.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Palace of VALENTINIAN.

Enter VALENTINIAN *and* HERACLIUS.

VALENTINIAN.

HAST thou ſeen Maximus?—Is he return'd?
'Tis whiſper'd that he's now about the court:
I order'd Ricemar to urge his ſtay
To try his valour in the feats of war,
Till I found means to ſooth Ardelia's grief,
Or reconcil'd her to my ardent love:
Yet I ſuſpect my will is diſobey'd.

HERACLIUS.

I, through the Campus Martius, ſaw him paſs,
Sullen and fierce as is the baited bull,
Whetted for blood and roaring for his prey,
When ruſhing on the victim of his rage.

VALENTINIAN.

He ſurely meditates ſome great revenge.
He has a bold, aſſuming, haughty ſoul—
A daring pride that ſpurns the leaſt affront—
I fear him more than Ætius.

HERACLIUS.

But Ætius is the idol of the army,
And at his beck—the young barbarian princes.
Haughty and brave, he brooks not thy delay;
Impatient for the promiſe made Gaudentius,
Sighs for a union with the fair Eudocia.

A ſon

A ſon ſo near—a ſceptre in his eye,
May empire give to his aſpiring father.

VALENTINIAN.

Go lead him hither with his favour'd ſon,
My hand ſhall rid me from all fear from them:
Once in the palace, and the work is done:
I'll ſave my daughter for a nobler union.
But find out Maximus—'tis him I dread;
A man thus injur'd never can forgive.

HERACLIUS.

He lov'd Ardelia with the pureſt flame;
Indeed ſhe was, for innocence and truth,
For elegance, true dignity, and grace,
The faireſt ſample of that ancient worth
Th' illuſtrious matrons boaſted to the world
When Rome was fam'd for every glorious deed.
But ſhe's no more!

VALENTINIAN.

Hah! ſlave, forbear—
Mean'ſt thou to try my love, or wake my fears?
Say thou at once—ſuſpenſe I ne'er could bear.

HERACLIUS.

Deſpair, reſentment, agonizing grief,
This morn have clos'd the period of a life
Too pure and ſpotleſs for the Roman world.

VALENTINIAN.

Then I'm undone forever—double the guards:
Go find Petronius out—ſuffer not him,
Nor Ætius, to ſee another ſun:
To make the work complete, bring Ætius hither;
My ſword is ready for a traitor's blood,
Nor dare another arm attempt his death.

[*Exit* HERACLIUS.

Down

Down coward conſcience, nor diſturb a prince.
My recent crime haunts all my ſleepleſs nights;
Yet, ſhall I fill the meaſure of my guilt
And turn aſſaſſin?—Am I ſo loſt, as thus
To ſtain my hand with the Patrician blood—
Pollute my court—diſgrace the Roman name?
No, that can't be—her infamy's complete,
And no new crime is wanting in the liſt
To ſtigmatize, and blaſt her ancient fame.
In this apartment, now my gloomy cell,
Where I have ſeen Ardelia drown'd in tears,
And almoſt dying with indignant grief,
All other crimes are light—let Ætius die.

Enter EDOXIA.

But hah!—here comes my torment—
My other conſcience—to kill me with a look—
The fair—the excellent—the wrong'd Edoxia;
Her preſence freezes all my powers of ſpeech;
I dare not lift my eye to meet her frown—
I'm all confuſion—guilt—perdition—death.

[*Retiring haſtily.*

EDOXIA.

Oh! fly me not, my ſovereign—
I only come to warn my much lov'd lord,
A lowering ſtorm may burſt upon his head.

VALENTINIAN.

I fear no ſtorms but from an injur'd wife;
The ſharp invectives of neglected beauty.

EDOXIA.

My wrongs I here forgive—thy ſafety now
Is all I have to wiſh—my ſoul is all alarm.

VALENTINIAN.

What idle terror has aſſail'd thy brain;

Or

Or what new rupture threatens empire next?

EDOXIA.

No foreign foe awakes my anxious thought;
The faithful Ætius commands the legions,
And guards the poſts from Tyber to the Rhine,
From bold inroads and fierce barbarick foes.

VALENTINIAN.

A woman, weaken'd by a ſenſe of wrongs,
With a creative fancy, ſpreads contagion,
If ſhe names her fears—yet tell the cauſe,
If any cauſe thou haſt, thus to alarm
And agitate my mind.

EDOXIA.

Petronius Maximus.

VALENTINIAN.

What of Petronius?

EDOXIA.

'Tis him I fear:—As from the Circus,
Late this morn I came, he enter'd—
Rage in his eye—unheeding what he ſaw;
Loſt in deep thought, and wrap'd in dark intrigue,
He onward mov'd, with ſlow and ſolemn ſteps—
A dark, fix'd brow, and geſture of deſpair—
He walk'd, and ſtop'd, and trod, and ſtamp'd the ground,
And gnaſh'd his teeth, and clench'd his nervous palm,
Then ſpread it on his breaſt and preſs'd it hard,
As if afraid his heart would burſt its bounds—
Then ſob'd a lowly ſigh—alas! Ardelia!
And, as the ſhadow moves beſide the man,
His ſteps were meaſur'd by an Alan prince;
But neither heeded all the ſports of Rome.
Forgive my lord, my ſoft officious care
To guard thy peace from each domeſtick foe.

VALENTINIAN.

Thou beſt of women! how ſhall I atone
For half the wrongs my faithleſs heart has done
To beauty blended with ſuperiour worth?

EDOXIA.

Ill boding dreams and gloomy apparitions—
Freſh bleeding ghoſts, and ſhades of darkeſt hue,
Haunt all my ſlumbers—ſome deep deſign,
Of terrible import, in Maximus I ſaw;
Waſte not a moment—oh! ſecure thyſelf,
And when we meet again, we'll talk of love. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

VALENTINIAN *and* HERACLIUS.

HERACLIUS.

ÆTIUS attends thy will, as does his ſon—
With them Beotius, preſect of the city.

VALENTINIAN.

Let only Ætius enter—tell him
The buſineſs is of ſuch import—
No other ear muſt witneſs—thou wilt thyſelf
Take care of both Beotius and Gaudentius.

HERACLIUS.

I will my lord—he and his noble friend
May fight Attila in the ſhades below,
If that fierce warrior ſtill remembers Rome.

VALENTINIAN.

No vulgar ſouls we'll ſend the gods this day;
Petronius next, and then defy the world.

[*Exit* HERACLIUS.

My

My arm be ſtrong—away with conſcious qualms—
His is a life worthy of Cæſar's ſword:
'Tis true I but ſuſpect his cover'd treaſon;
Yet, Ætius muſt die—as ſhall Gaudentius.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

EUDOCIA *and* PLACIDIA.

EUDOCIA.

OH! my Placidia,
The good, the generous Ætius is dead,
And murder'd by the hand of Valentinian.

PLACIDIA.

Impoſſible!—'tis but the tale of malice, whiſper'd round,
By ſome vile foe to Valentinian's houſe.

EUDOCIA.

'Tis done,
And hell itſelf records the dreadful deed.

PLACIDIA.

My father ne'er could ſtain the imperial throne
By ſuch a crime as this!
What! like the madman of old Philip's race,
Plunge his drawn dagger in the faithful breaſt
Of ſuch a friend as Ætius?

EUDOCIA

He has,
And my Gaudentius juſt eſcap'd the blow
Heraclius deſign'd, by ſpeedy flight,
And in his ſtead Beotius was ſlain.

PLACIDIA.

PLACIDIA.

Where is the virtuous youth?—and where his friends?

EUDOCIA.

He pass'd the guards, Traustila by his side,
And, through the western gate, they, swift as lightning,
Hasted to Liguria—though much he lov'd,
He'll ne'er forgive the murd'rer of his sire;
He has a filial heart and valiant arm,
And nature's instinct wakes a tender strife.
The genuine virtues of his youthful heart,
Cherish'd by reason—ripen'd to sublime,
Nurs'd up by honour, gratitude and worth,
Call loud for vengeance o'er his father's tomb.

PLACIDIA.

Alas! the gath'ring storm—what chosen blasts,
Heaven's vengeance next pours down, is with the gods.

EUDOCIA.

The death of Ætius augurs ill to Rome;
His soul, too firm to fear, or Goths, or Huns;
Too great to be corrupted, or deceiv'd,
Sooth'd their rough passions, balanc'd their ambition;
They lov'd, they fear'd, and will avenge his death.

PLACIDIA.

When jealousy's at war with wild ambition,
And reason quits the helm amid the storm,
The furious hurricane of passion swells
Till ev'ry sail hurls on to sure perdition.

EUDOCIA.

Ah! my Gaudentius—could Eudocia's blood
Wash off the guilt contracted by her sire,
These veins I'd ope, and warm libations pour
Down at thy feet, to make his daughter

Worthy

Worthy of thy love—love did I ſay?—no—
He muſt forever hate—deſpiſe—deteſt—
And curſe the name of Cæſar's blaſted race,
And fly the ſight of his too wretched daughter.

PLACIDIA.

Alas! I fear—I know not what I fear—
Imagination's ſhort of what I dread
From complicated guilt, which ſtalks abroad.
Oh! Heaven avert the deſtiny of Rome!

EUDOCIA.

I'm ſick of life—of pageantry and pomp—
Of thrones and ſceptres ſtain'd by human blood:
Come let us wander down the ſacred walks,
The ſilent grots, where virtue once reclin'd.
The verdant foreſts bend their lofty tops
To make a covert for the weary head;
There tranquiliz'd beneath pale Cynthia's ſhade,
We'll breathe and whiſper diſappointed love;
And weep our country, family and friends,
'Till bright Aurora ſtreaks the eaſtern ſkies
And lights us back among the buſy throng.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

VALENTINIAN *and* HERACLIUS.

VALENTINIAN.

THE gilded morn in tranſports hails the day,
And the ſhrill trumpet ſounds to martial ſports;
But yet a certain heavineſs hangs o'er me,
As though a tempeſt burſt from midnight clouds.

Were

Were I afraid of either gods or men,
I'd ſwear this day is like the ides of March,
Big with portentous omens :—Calphurnia's dreams,
And my Edoxia's fears, bear ſuch a ſemblance
That through the night, (even if a cricket moves)
I ſtart—I cry—my evil genius ! ſay,
Doſt come with Ætius' or Petronius' ſword ?

HERACLIUS.

No ſuperſtitious dread ſhould ere pervade
The royal boſom of a Roman prince ;
Encircled deep by faithful veteran bands
Who wait his fiat, and obſerve his nod,
To feed his pleaſures, or to blaſt his foes ;
To light the capitol, or guard the ſtate,
Or make the empire tremble at his frown.

VALENTINIAN.

The noble Ætius, of princely birth,
Poſſeſs'd a ſoul by Roman valour warm'd,
That won the plaudits both of friends and foes ;
The legions lov'd—the citizens ador'd,
And all will murmur at his ſudden fall :
Yet more I fear Petronius's rage,
Than all the city, ſenators, or troops.

HERACLIUS.

Thou haſt done well to cut a traitor down
Ere he uſurp'd and rob'd thee of a throne ;
And if plebeian, or patrician tongues,
Should utter menace, or a plaintive word,
Teach them the fate of Rome hangs on thy will.

VALENTINIAN.

But where is Maximus ?
Though he's in friendſhip, gen'rous and ſincere,
Yet injur'd once, implacably he hates :

'Twou'd

'Twou'd beggar language to deſcribe his pride,
His ſtrength of paſſion when arous'd to rage;
Inexorable vengeance tears his ſoul:
Conſtant and noble, as a god he loves,
But as a furious fiend, rewards his foes;
Nought but their death can cool his paſſions down.

HERACLIUS.

Petronius Maximus returns no more
To interrupt the pleaſures of the court:
Ardelia dead—the funeral pile burnt down—
Her aſhes gather'd in a golden urn;
He in deſpair has left the imperial city.
Beſide the margin of the Tuſcan ſhore,
In a ſmall villa of the Anician name,
He's gone to weep his folly and his fate.

VALENTINIAN.

Where are his friends?—his num'rous train of clients?
Where the admiring crowds fed by his hand,
And baſking in his wealth?

HERACLIUS.

Juſt as the world in ev'ry age have done,
Paying their court where better fortune ſmiles;
'Tis not the ſun, when muffled up in clouds
And plunging down the weſtern briny main
Mankind adore.
The eaſtern monarch juſt from Thetis' bed,
With roſy bluſhes on his morning beams,
Majeſtick riſing o'er the burniſh'd world,
Beholds his homagers on ev'ry ſide;
As in the field of Mars amid the ſports,
The ſon of Theodotius, is a god.

VALENTINIAN.

Yet anguiſh tears, and love inflames my breaſt;

Oh!

Oh! would oblivion wrap a fable veil
O'er my remorſe, and o'er Ardelia's grief,
O'er her bright form, and her untimely death,
I might defy the vengeance of her lord:
Methinks I ſee her lovely tearful eye
With ſcornful glances fir'd—till grief and fear,
And conſternation numb my torpid frame.

HERACLIUS.

Why ſhould an emperor fear?

VALENTINIAN.

Say, where's Gaudentius?

HERACLIUS.

He, ſwift of foot as an Herulian archer,
Eſcap'd my ſword, and ſhelters in the camp;
But after him—with thy expreſs command—
A truſty meſſenger I have diſpatch'd:
This night his ſire may meet him in the ſhades.

VALENTINIAN.

Where is Trauliſta—prince of the Oſtrogoths,
Dauntleſs and brave—his firſt—his choſen friend?

HERACLIUS.

Gone to Liguria with the ſon of Ætius;
He lov'd him much.

VALENTINIAN.

Then let him ſhare his fate.

HERACLIUS.

Leave them to me, and chaſe thy cares away;
The ſports are ready—guarded every poſt,
And while the victims in the Circus bleed,
Smile that thy foes on the ſame moment fall.

VALENTINIAN.

VALENTINIAN.

Haſte to the field of Mars—there I'll forget,
A pang e'er touch'd my heart.

HERACLIUS.

There learn all Rome—
That if they brave the mandates of thy lip,
A ſov'reign's arm ſhall puniſh as it ought.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

GAUDENTIUS *ſolus—in diſguiſe—juſt returned to the city, where he was ſhewn the murdered body of* ÆTIUS.

WAS this the dowry of the fair Eudocia,
The mangled body of my much lov'd ſire
Preſented by her father's guilty hand?
Juſt gods avenge—the trait'rous deed avenge!
What is the faith—or what the gratitude,
Or what the ſacred promiſe of an emperor!
As cruelty portrays an abject mind,
Servility precedes the fall of ſtates:
In this declenſion of the Roman world,
While tyrants dip the ſcymitar in blood,
And ſport on human miſery at large,
Shall I ſit down with folded arms and ſee
A monſter gorging on a parent's blood;
Or unaveng'd behold a father die
By Valentinian's baſe ungrateful hand!
Yet he, alas! is my Eudocia's ſire:
But glory, fame, ambition and revenge
Bid me eraſe this paſſion from my heart,

And boldly ſtem the madneſs of the times,
Recover Rome and reinſtate her power,
And bring her back to glory, wealth and fame.
But hah!—Eudocia, penſive and alone;
[*Seeing* EUDOCIA *at a diſtance.*
Shall I advance, or baniſh her forever?
[*While he heſitates,* EUDOCIA *ſlowly croſſes the ſtage without obſerving him.*]
One tear diſſolves the firmneſs of my ſoul,
Unmans the mind, and melts the warrior down;
Daſhes his hope, and weakens his reſolve;
'Tis ruin to retire—death to ſpeak.
Chaſte as Diana in each graceful move,
While Venus lights the features of her face
And gives her ſon the torch to fire my ſoul;
Yet honour, conſcience, virtue and the world
Forbid a union with his bloody houſe;
My father's murderer—the gods forbid!
Yet ſhe's all innocence—and virtue's ſoul
Shines forth conſpicuous in her heavenly form:
I haſte from her as from the hand of death.
[*Exeunt different ways.*

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE I.

MAXIMUS *ſolus, in the Anician Palace, the ſun juſt riſing.*

THE bird of death that nightly pecks the roof,
Or ſhrieks beſide the caverns of the dead;
Or paler ſceptres that infeſt the tombs
Of guilt and darkneſs, horror or deſpair,
Are far more welcome to a wretch like me
Than yon bright rays that deck the opening morn;
That ſoftly gliding o'er the dewy field
Give life to nature—cheer the daiſied lawn,
Where my Ardelia trod the dappled mead,
And breath'd freſh ſweetneſs through the blooming dale.
What is the ſun to Maximus?
Its noon tide ray ſhews him the ſport of fools;
The ſimple pander of a lecher's guilt.
Ye gods! was reaſon loſt, that, ſpiritleſs,
My weak, my daſtard hand held back this ſword
From ſtriking inſtant at the tyrant's heart,
When on a frivolous pretence he urg'd,
Before another day, I'd ſee the camp?
But by the powers that ſhake the Ætnean vaults,
By all the deities of Rome I ſwear;
And ſtill more ſolemnly I bind my ſoul,
By the great God to whom Ardelia bow'd,
My vengeance ſhall not ſleep.

Enter TRAULISTA.

TRAULISTA.

What cauſe is there for Maximus's grief?
Why is thy boſom tortur'd with deſpair?

Unfold

Unfold the tale, command Traulista's ſword;
Wake up full vengeance, or forbear to grieve.

MAXIMUS.

Tortures may ſeize, and furies tear my heart,
But words can't utter what my ſoul endures;
Confuſion darkens all my powers of ſpeech,
And bluſhes blaſt the wretch that ſacrific'd
His fame—his peace—his honour—and his wife
To glut a tyrant's luſt.—My brain grows hot—
It kindles to diſtraction—yet Valentinian lives.

TRAULISTA.

What, did the monſter, in thine abſence, dare
Profane the ſacred threſhold of thy peace?

MAXIMUS.

She, ever duteous to her lord's command,
Was, by the darkeſt plot of hell, deceiv'd;
This ring, ſo often by her huſband ſent
In times too dangerous for other meſſage,
To her preſented, by the baſe Heraclius,
Reluctantly, ſhe haſten'd to the palace—
Though terror ſeiz'd and chil'd her frighted ſoul:
She through each hollow, vacant room was drag'd,
Till in the ſilent deep abode of guilt,
As a dark fiend, the emperor alone
Waited the victim of his madden'd flame:
He ſeiz'd his prey—nor cries, nor tears avail'd;
She Heaven implor'd—to pitying Angels pray'd,
And in deſpair ſhe call'd on her Petronius,
Yet thought his ſanction back'd the vile deſign.

TRAULISTA.

And hates thee for ſuſpected perfidy.

MAXIMUS.

'Twas paſt the midnight watch when I return'd;

With

With anxious dread and deep ſuſpenſe I flew
To her abode of miſery and grief.
In ſables dreſs'd—a taper juſt burnt down—
That darkly glimmer'd gloom from ſide to ſide—
Indignant ſcorn glanc'd from her languid eye;
While tears bedew'd her bright angelick face,
As if a cherub wept, the radiant beams
Of ſtars obſcur'd, or of extinguiſh'd ſuns:
Diſmay'd ſhe held a dagger in her hand
As half reſolv'd to plunge it in her breaſt,
Yet trembled at the purpoſe of her ſoul;
I caught her hand, and drew the weapon thence,
Ere ſhe perceiv'd her wretched huſband nigh.

TRAULISTA.

Sure ſhe's too good to let reſentment burn.

MAXIMUS.

"Poor Maximus! ſhe cry'd—ſpite of thy guilt,
My ſoul ſtill pities thee—receive this pledge
To cheat ſome other ſoft, believing fool:
Blot from thy thought that e'er Ardelia liv'd
To be the ſport of riot and debauch."
Then fix'd the fatal ſignet on my hand,
This curſed ſignet that has ſeal'd my doom,
[*Shews the ſignet.*
And branded me with infamy forever.
She breath'd a ſob as if a ſeraph ſigh'd,
Drop'd a kind tear, and ſmil'd a laſt adieu.

TRAULISTA.

Hah! dead!—ſay'ſt thou Ardelia's dead?

MAXIMUS.

All the big paſſions of a noble ſoul
Thrill'd through her heart, and ſtiffen'd all her frame;

The ſhining angel left this blaſted world,
And now methinks, ineffably ſerene,
On yon bright azure golden ſkirted cloud,
Ardelia gently chides this tardy hand
That lingers thus while unaveng'd her death.

TRAULISTA.

I bind me by this ſword, a ſoldier's oath,
To vindicate in blood her wounded fame.

MAXIMUS.

Her ſoul unſtain'd, immaculate and pure,
Not meagre malice dare impeach her mind;
Nor e'en Megara's tongue, though it were dip'd
In all the poiſons of her curling ſnakes,
Till the gall ganger'd every name but hers,
Durſt whiſper aught to wound Ardelia's fame:
But yet her wrongs may urge thy dauntleſs arm,
And give full vigour to a bold deſign,
To ſmite a ſcepter'd brow—yes—that is all—
The man himſelf's a poltroon—
Yet he's an emperor.

TRAULISTA.

This makes him worthy of Trauliſta's ſword.
My arm ſhall aid till juſtice holds the ſcale
To ſoften grief, or injury repair.

MAXIMUS.

Go, find thy friends, and ere the work begins,
I aſk a moment to indulge my grief;
'The luxury of tears' is not for me—
My ſoul's too big for ſuch a ſoft relief;
Yet I may rave and riot o'er my woes.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE II.

MAXIMUS *and* GAUDENTIUS.

MAXIMUS.

THAT dignity the gods themſelves inſpir'd,
When Rome inflam'd with patriotick zeal,
Long taught the world to tremble and admire,
Lies faint and languid in the wane of fame,
And muſt expire in luxury's lew'd lap
If not ſupported by ſome vigorous arm;
Th' Armorici 'tis ſaid have paſs'd the Rhine,
And ruder tribes, both Goth and Vandal hoſts,
May ſoon be thundering at the gates of Rome;
While here, a treacherous, bloody minded prince
Stains the imperial court with ſlaughter'd friends,
And riots in the zenith of his pride.

GAUDENTIUS.

And are there none in this diſtracted ſtate
Whoſe courage, zeal, and energy of mind,
May ſtem the tide, and break the tyrant's yoke?

MAXIMUS.

The Roman people, ſicken'd by his ſloth,
Deteſt a weak, a lecherous, daſtard prince
Who yet cuts down the braveſt men Rome boaſts,
And mocks the moſt heroick of her ſons:
Abuſed virgins rave in wild deſpair;
Affronted matrons weep, and beauty ſighs,
While groans reecho from the tomb of grief,
And cry for vengeance on the emperor's head;
For innocence betray'd, and virtue ſold.

GAUDENTIUS,

GAUDENTIUS.

Diſmay'd by blood, the ſenators deteſt
A ſovereign, cruel, impotent and baſe,
And all the army's ripen'd for revolt.

MAXIMUS.

'Tis time to daſh him from th' imperial throne;
Name his ſucceſſor, and the work is done.

GAUDENTIUS.

The crown, the ſceptre, the regalia wait,
Petronius's will to guide the realm,
And bid the miſtreſs of the world revive.

MAXIMUS.

Th' imperial crown has not a charm for me;
Hung on a ſoldier's ſpear, expos'd to ſale,
Stain'd with the blood of a long line of Cæſars,
From Julius down to Valentinian's reign,
'Tis fall'n too low to wake ambition up.
The palace groans with guilt too dark to name;
'Tis but the ſplendid theatre of woe,
From age to age the ſhambles of mankind,
On which to ſacrifice the richeſt blood
The Roman annals boaſt—the crimſon ſtream
Has ras'd the memory that a virtue liv'd,
Or that a noble deed from virtue ſprang
In the proud boaſts of ancient Roman fame.

GAUDENTIUS.

Ambition, in a noble, virtuous mind,
Is the firſt paſſion that the gods implant,
And ſoars to glory till it meets the ſkies:
If it has place in Maximus's breaſt,
Fortune, who ſports with diadems and crowns
This day may hail him emperor of the weſt.

GAUDENTIUS,

GAUDENTIUS *pauſes a moment, retires thoughtfully a few ſteps, ſmothers an exclamation, and only articulates*

——————————Oh! my Eudocia.

MAXIMUS.

'Tis juſt revenge that animates my arm;
But did ambition urge my purpoſe on?
Yet, my young penſive friend, if Valentinian
Wraps his mantle o'er his trembling head—
Like Julius Cæſar crys—"Brutus my ſon,"
Will not Eudocia unnerve thy arm?

GAUDENTIUS.

Ah! my Eudocia!—would he were not thy ſire;
But from my heart I tear thee for a moment,
'Till Ætius's manes are appeas'd,
And fair Ardelia's wrongs are all aveng'd.

MAXIMUS.

But art thou ſure thou canſt this teſt ſuſtain?
This teſt ſevere, of friendſhip, honour, love,
Will try thy ſoul, and probe thee to the heart.
Will not the purpoſe ſhake, when her ſoft image
Dances in thine eye, and pity pleads?
But yet thou haſt a ſtruggle more ſevere;
Thou may'ſt as well avenge thy bleeding friends,
And draw thy ſword in injur'd virtue's cauſe:
'Tis whiſper'd through the court the Suevick chief,
The valiant Ricemar, has purchas'd peace
With Genſeric the terror of the weſt;
And that the heireſs of the imperial throne
Is the rich price—that Hunneric his ſon
Is on his way to wed the fair Eudocia.

GAUDENTIUS.

Petronius, thou haſt fix'd my wav'ring will;
Let me lead on—my ſword alone,

Without

Without another's aid, ſhall find its way
To Valentinian's heart.

MAXIMUS.

The hour draws nigh—the exerciſe begins—
Arm thy brave heart, and bid adieu to love.

[*Exit* MAXIMUS.

GAUDENTIUS.

How would my eyeballs from their ſockets ſtart
To ſee Eudocia in that monſter's arms?
Can her fair ſoul mix with the horrid brood,
Begot and nurtur'd in the Quadian lakes!
Beneath the vaulted, black Carpathian mount,
Amidſt the darkneſs of Cimmerian damps,
As nature ſported with infernal fiends
She gender'd there this ill form'd ſqualid birth,
And mid'ſt the jargon of diſcordant ſounds
She call'd the beardleſs, uncouth monſter, Hunneric:
And ſhall this ſavage violate her charms?
Save her, ye gods!—oh! ſave the Roman name
From ſuch a ſtain, indelible and dark.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

MAXIMUS *and* TRAULISTA.

MAXIMUS.

HAIL, mighty prince of great Hermannic's line!
Is thy ſword whetted to avenge thy friends?

TRAULISTA.

No eagle darting down the ſlaughter'd field
Of human carnage ſtrew'd with mangled limbs,

More

More ſwiftly bends its talons to the prey,
Than ſhall my ſword deal thunderbolts around,
Whene'er Petronius wiſhes for its aid.

MAXIMUS.

But art thou ſure that not one traitor lurks,
Nor coward heart in thy ſelected band?

TRAULISTA.

There's not a man but what would bay the lion,
Or meet the tyger growling from his den,
By hunger urg'd to prowl for human prey.
When Cæſar's dial marks meridian day,
They'll ſpring to action at the trump of war;
As the train'd ſteed who ſnuffs the northern air
Leaps through the crowd, and leaves the winds behind.

MAXIMUS.

Have they ne'er trembled at an emperor's frown,
Nor felt the ſervile homage of a ſlave?
Will not the valiant arm grow ſick and flag,
And the drawn dagger droop e'en in thy hand
As it approaches Valentinian's breaſt?

TRAULISTA.

Have I not ſworn by Mars's fiery ſword,
The redden'd ſymbol of the Scythian faith,
To aid thee to avenge thine injur'd love?
Not Caſca's arm e'er gave a ſurer blow
Than ſhall Traulista's.

MAXIMUS.

The great Triumvirs of the world have fall'n
By weaker hands than thine—thou art my Caſſius—
But I fear Gaudentius—he's of a ſofter mould—
Humane and tender—though a valiant prince;
He feels the ſofteſt paſſion for Eudocia.

TRAULISTA.

TRAULISTA.

He feels no pang but for Eudocia's ſake;
Yet jealouſy has wak'd a war within;
Reſentment, love, and rage, by turns diſtract,
And make his ſoul a chaos of deſpair.

MAXIMUS.

Will he o'ercome this painful ſtruggle
In a noble breaſt?—Can he renounce her charms?
When filial tears are leagu'd with juſt revenge,
When duty, fame, and glory combat love,
Will the fond lover act the hero's part,
And ſnatch the princeſs from a rival's arms,
Mid'ſt blood and ſlaughter, and the freſh grown yews
His ſword may ſtrew around her father's tomb?

TRAULISTA.

Strike, now's the time, before his paſſions cool.

MAXIMUS.

Will Valentinian venture to the ſports?

TRAULISTA.

The emperor comes with more than uſual pomp,
A choſen cohort added to the guards.

MAXIMUS.

Though guilt makes cowards, juſtice finds them out:
Not all the legions of the weſtern world
Shall ſcreen him from my ſword, my juſt revenge.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE IV.

EUDOCIA *and* PLACIDIA.

EUDOCIA.

ALAS! my fears—my throbbing heart lie ſtill,
Nor ſtartle thus, e'en at a quiv'ring leaf:
The downy pillow gives me no repoſe,
And ſlumbers fly from the ſoft ſilken couch;
Ill boding terrors ſhake the gilded roof;
Methinks I hear a diſtant din of arms——
——alarms——and ſhouts—— [*Shouts without.*
As though from heaven's battlements were burſt
Some dreadful ruin, that may empire ſhake.

PLACIDIA.

Another ſhout—I fear ſome ſignal blow:
This early morn, as ſleep forſook my lids,
I from my window ſaw Trauliſta haſte;
Two chiefs [illegible]de led on a choſen band,
So like Thuringian blood hounds in their geſtures,
I trembled at the ſight; yet as they paſs'd
I caught a ſignal meant to be conceal'd,
A hoarſe, low, hollow voice growl'd from the midſt,
"Haſte to the Campus Martius."

EUDOCIA.

Ah! what new ſhock?—the tumult bends this way—
Oh! Valentinian! [*The noiſe draws near.*

PLACIDIA.

The furious multitude ruſh towards the palace;
I hear the legions ſhout—long live the Emperor
Petronius Maximus.

EUDOCIA.

Undone—undone forever!
Where is our father?—Oh! where the good Edoxia?
And midſt the group of miſery and woe—
Would heav'n permit—ah! where is my Gaudentius?

[GAUDENTIUS *ruſhes ſuddenly into the Palace—Soldiers and Guards in tumult without.*]

GAUDENTIUS.

He's here, my princeſs—he guards the fair Eudocia—
Protects her life from every ruffian hand,
Nor fate again ſhall ſnatch her from mine arms.

EUDOCIA.

Oh! leave a wretch abandon'd to her fears.

GAUDENTIUS.

What! leave Eudocia midſt this furious ſtorm!
Name it no more—death ſtalks abroad,
And vengeance lifts his arm—but Heaven forbid
That innocence ſhould feel the dread effects
Of cruelty and guilt.

EUDOCIA.

If e'er thou lov'd—if pity touch thy ſoul—
Fly hence to ſuccour Rome, and ſave my father.

GAUDENTIUS.

Thy father!—he had a friend whoſe arm—
Yes, Ætius was his friend—Oh! Ætius.

EUDOCIA.

Barbarous man! can'ſt thou reproach Eudocia,
And chill her with the terror of a name
That rives her inmoſt ſoul with guilt and horror?

GAUDENTIUS.

Forgive me, princeſs.

EUDOCIA.

EUDOCIA.

Oh! Gaudentius—
Could my poor life atone—my clay cold corſe
I'd lay on Ætius' tomb—ſprinkle his urn—
Refreſh his memory with the laſt purple drop
That warms to love, the heart of thy Eudocia.

GAUDENTIUS.

Pardon the tranſports of my filial breaſt,
That pours its ſorrows o'er a father's tomb;
Great Ætius's virtues juſtly claim
A tributary tear from half the world.

EUDOCIA.

Had'ſt thou a marble heart, or ſtoick ſoul,
Unmov'd at aught the deſtinies decree,
Though death cut down the hero, father, friend,
I'd ſpurn a wretch that mock'd theſe tender names
Back from my ſoul to ravage the wild woods.
But ſay, what tale hangs on thy tongue—
Thou durſt not name?

GAUDENTIUS.

If fate commands, and wraps both in a ſhroud,
We muſt forget that e'er our fathers liv'd.

EUDOCIA.

Hah! parricide!
Haſt thou the death of Ætius aveng'd?
What! durſt thou lift thy ſacrilegious hand,
And hurl a blow that ſevers me forever
From thine arms? then come with this bold front
And ſubtle tongue, to lay thy ſword
Wet with her father's blood, at his Eudocia's feet?

GAUDENTIUS.

Not all the wrongs I ſuffer'd from thy ſire,
Nor yet the vengeance that my own demand,

Could

Could urge my arm to aim an impious blow
That might a moment interrupt thy peace?
But Maximus—

EUDOCIA.

What of the traitor Maximus?

GAUDENTIUS.

Ought never to forgive Ardelia's wrongs.

EUDOCIA.

Tell me the worſt—am I the only wretch
Of all my houſe, that lives to weep?

GAUDENTIUS.

Like the thrice heated bolt from heav'ns high arch,
Through the dark gloom of dreary night and horror,
That falls and blaſts the cedar's lofty top,
The light'ning fell on Valentinian's head.

EUDOCIA.

From heaven?—no, 'twas hell that belch'd the flame;
By jarring fiends the pointed ſword was whet,
And thou waſt witneſs to the horrid deed.
Let us, Placidia, haſte with trembling ſteps,
(Ere earth ſhall ſink beneath his guilty feet,)
Like the twin ſiſters of misfortune lead,
If yet the empreſs lives, to her apartment.

[*The Princeſſes in an agony of grief retire.—Exit* GAUDENTIUS.]

SCENE V.

The Palace——EDOXIA, *ſola.*

WHEN will theſe dark and lowering clouds paſs o'er,
And brighter aſpects tinge the weſtern ſkies?

This

This day is big with omens of deſpair,
And ſome wild tumult rages loud abroad ;
Each face is pale, and every eye's aſkance,
As wrapt in dark myſterious intrigue :
That Maximus muſt meditate revenge
There's not a doubt ; and when he ſtrikes
'Twill be a deadly blow—his arm diſdains
A mean or vulgar ſtroke—and his bold ſpirit
Shakes at no reſolve—yet 'tis too ſoon
To execute the deed—his dreaded rage,
Oh ! Heaven !—juſt Heaven reſtrain !
Hah ! who art thou that ent'reſt thus abrupt ?
[LEO *enters haſtily in diſguiſe.*
Diſguis'd, as if beneath a vizard, lurk'd
Miſchief and treaſon—murder—guilt and death !

LEO.

There is no time for leave of audience now ;
Haſte hence my empreſs—fly the palace gates
Ere all the avenues are ſeiz'd by Maximus.

EDOXIA.

Is then the emperor ſlain ?
Am I the ſlave of Maximus ?
Forbid it all ye powers of heaven and earth !

LEO.

Thy perſon may be ſafe, if not a moment's loſt.

EDOXIA.

What ! like a timid fugitive to fly,
And rove a friendleſs world from court to court ?
Though royalty is toſs'd from gale to gale
On fortune's fickle wing, the ſportive bubble,
The plaything of her moſt capricious hour ;
Yet know, Edoxia dares to hold a throne,
And has a ſoul to ſcourge a traitor's guilt.

Name thou the firſt who ſtruck the impious blow
That ſhakes the glory of the imperial crown,
He'll feel what vengeance 'tis my arm inflicts.

LEO.

Petronius led the band—the cohorts join'd—
Trauliſta waited at the Campus Martius,
'Till Valentinian enter'd.
The fierce barbarian ſtruck his helmet off,
And, ſwift as light'ning, fell an hundred blows;
His trembling ſoul eſcap'd without a groan;
The army and the Gothic princes cry'd
Long live the emperor, Petronius Maximus.

EDOXIA.

Forſook—betray'd—and widow'd in an hour!
Alas! my daughters!—where are the lovely maids?
Are my Eudocia and Placidia ſafe,
Or are the charms of innocence and worth,
Of virgin beauty, piety, and truth,
The ſport of Gothic ſlaves? [*Enter Princeſſes.*
——————Ah! my Placidia!
This tender woe becomes thy filial eye:
Alas, Eudocia!—lovely in thy grief;
I can no more than ſighs and tears beſtow,
'Tis all I have to lend my hapleſs children.

EUDOCIA

Lend not a ſigh to me—I am too wretched—
But ſpare thy tears for thoſe who may be bleſt.

EDOXIA.

My tears for thee can never ceaſe to flow;
Yet tears are but unſeemly gifts indeed,
And ill become the ſoft hymenial hour.
This was the day, by ſolemn promiſe made
His noble ſire—Gaudentius might have claim'd

His lovely bride, and ſeal'd his nuptials
With the fair Eudocia.

EUDOCIA.

Name him no more—
Let me forget that e'er I was belov'd.

EDOXIA.

Theſe tears indulge, to bathe his ſacred urn,
And while they trickle o'er thy blooming cheek,
Water the willows round thy father's tomb,
Till the brave veteran Ætius ſhall chace
The bold Petronius from the imperial throne.

EUDOCIA.

Ah! Ætius!—Oh! happy Rome, if Ætius had liv'd.

EDOXIA.

Had Ætius liv'd!—Juſt gods! what means Eudocia?
Has the monſter ſlain the noble Ætius,
And rais'd ſo high the mounds of death around,
That juſtice cannot reach a traitor's heart?

EUDOCIA.

Great Ætius is dead—ſpare me the reſt,
Nor from my bleeding breaſt the ſtory wring.

EDOXIA.

I'm loſt and wilder'd in this mazy path;
What furious fiend preſides this awful day!
On every ſide ſome ſpectre ghaſtly grins,
Through floods of reeking gore, and beckons down
To Hades' dark, benighted, diſmal ſhore.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

MAXIMUS, *solus.*

NOW what am I?——————an emperor——
——————————a splendid wretch——
Perch'd on the blood stain'd summit of the world.
Search through each horrid wild of dreary woe,
From Tyber's stream to Danube's frozen banks,
From fair Hetruria to the Hyrcanian wood,
Or blacker forests of Carpathian gloom,
There's not a culprit so completely curs'd—
Tortur'd in pomp—in tenfold misery plung'd,
And torn with guilty greatness, as myself.
Happy Damocles—only envy'd king,
Whose reign began and ended in a day!
My vengeance now's complete; but where's my peace?
Oh! could I leave the world of Roman slaves,
Exil'd to Italy's most distant bounds,
Resume that life of innocence and ease
Which bless'd the noontide of my happier days,
When my Ardelia's smile crown'd all my bliss!
But ah! her name——
Wakes all the baleful passions of my soul.
If Valentinian's grim and ghastly ghost
Still wanders here, and can be more accurs'd,
Let mad Alecto's furious sisters join
To make his woes complete—and doubly damn'd,
Let him look through the dank and dismal shades,
Of night and death—in anguish let him see
His rival riot in Edoxia's arms.

Exit.

Enter LEO.

My friend—my faithful Leo.

LEO.

I am the friend of Rome, and of Petronius—
Of law—of juſtice—and the rights of man—
The ſenators of Rome—and of Edoxia.

MAXIMUS.

Is the imperial family ſecure?
Let not the ſmalleſt diſreſpect be ſhewn
Or to the empreſs, or her royal houſe.

LEO.

Edoxia ſits like ſome majeſtick oak,
Or fairer cedar, that o'ertops the hills,
Strip'd of its leafy robes—ſhook to the root,
By the rude tempeſt, or autumnal blaſts;
The ſtorm ſubſides, the naked branches huſh'd,
Silent and ſtill, demand a pitying tear
From ev'ry way worn traveller's weeping eye,
Who us'd to reſt beneath its friendly ſhade.

MAXIMUS.

The wheel of fortune, rapid in its flight,
Lags not for man, when on its ſwift routine;
Nor does the goddeſs ponder unreſolv'd:
She wafts at once, and on her lofty car,
Lifts up her puppet—mounts him to the ſkies,
Or from the pinnacle, hurls headlong down,
The ſteep abyſs of diſappointed hope.
Thus the firſt ſtroke ſucceſsful—
A beardleſs Goth huzza'd, "Petronius reigns!"
The factious legions caught the feeble ſound;
And the ſame moment ſaw the imperial robes
Torn from one emperor, and another made,
Without a murmur from the ſervile throng:

Borne

Borne through the crowd—till to the palace brought,
I've not yet heard Heraclius's fate.

LEO.

The faithful minion caught a thouſand wounds,
Aim'd at his maſter by Trauliſta's band;
He curs'd alternate, heaven, himſelf and thee,
And di'd an hero, though he'd liv'd a ſlave.

MAXIMUS.

Then bid a truce to ſlaughter;
Let not a drop of Roman blood be ſpilt:
And now, I have another game to play;
Edoxia muſt be mine—her hand I'll ſeize—
Her heart I leave till time may do its work.
By a long line of anceſtry, a queen,
Her regal title to the imperial crown
Muſt bind it faſt on Maximus's brow.

LEO.

She ſtands ſuperiour to life's roughen'd ſtorms;
Looks calmly down, and bids the waves roll on
Till the laſt ſurge ingulphs her weary head.
Yet this new ſcene may ſhake her firm reſolve,
And raiſe a tempeſt in her tranquil breaſt.

MAXIMUS.

Repair to her—if poſſible perſuade—
Yet fix'd as fate is Maximus's will;
Though keen reſentment agitates her breaſt,
Or her indignant ſoul ſhould burſt with rage,
Yet ere tomorrow's ſun deſcends the vale,
And hides behind yon weſtern burniſh'd hill,
Our hands are join'd by wedlock's ſacred tie;
It muſt be ſo, or I'm but half aveng'd. [*Exit* LEO.
'Tis done—the envy'd maſter of the world conceals

A thouſand

A thouſand pangs beneath a purple robe;
Yet furies lurk, and vipers gnaw within,
And give the lie to ſplendid pomp without.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

EDOXIA, *ſolus.*

WHERE ſhall I fly?—to what ſequeſter'd ſhade
Where the world's diſtant din no more alarms,
Or warring paſſions burſt through nature's tie
And make mankind creation's fouleſt ſtain.
Horror and guilt ſtare wild in every eye;
Freedom extinguiſh'd in the fumes of luſt
Bleeds freſh beſide Rome's long expiring fame;
Virtue's become the rude barbarian's jeſt,
Barter'd for gold, and floating down the tide
Of foreign vice, ſtain'd with domeſtick guilt:
Oh! could I hide in ſome dark hermitage,
Beneath ſome hollow, diſmal, broken cliff,
I'd weep forlorn the miſeries of Rome,
Till time's laſt billow broke, and left me quiet
On the naked ſtrand.—[*Enter* LEO.]—Ah! Leo,
Durſt thou be ſtill the friend of ſad Edoxia?
Haſt thou the courage yet to viſit grief,
And ſooth a wretch by ſympathetick tears;
And reconcile me to the name of man?
Can'ſt ſhew me one leſs cruel than the tyger
Nurs'd in the wilds, and feaſting on the fleſh
Of all but his own ſpecies?
This predilection's left to man alone,
To drink and riot on his brother's blood.

LEO.

LEO.

Fate has ordain'd—'tis thou muſt give us peace;
Thy lenient hand alone.

EDOXIA.

Mock not my woe.

LEO.

'Tis thou my empreſs, who muſt ſtop the tide
That threats the deluge of the Roman world;
The jarring factions that tear up the ſtate
Thyſelf muſt quell, and reconcile—

EDOXIA.

Inſult not my diſtreſs.

LEO.

The emperor Maximus—

EDOXIA.

Whoſe name ſtrikes daggers through my ſhivering ſoul!

LEO.

Demands an audience.

EDOXIA.

Speak not a word my ſoul diſdains to hear.

LEO.

The Roman people—

EDOXIA.

Ah! what is Rome to me?

LEO.

All wiſh a union in the royal pair;
nd Maximus adores Edoxia's virtues.

EDOXIA.

What is the ſanction that emboldens thee,
Thus to affront thy queen?

LEO.

Oh! pity Rome—the empire—and thy country—
Save thy noble houſe.

EDOXIA.

EDOXIA.

I have no country.
What's life, or empire, or the world to me?

LEO.

Yet hear—oh! hear—for Maximus resolves.

EDOXIA.

And art thou come to sue for Maximus,
Whose blacken'd soul, blown up by fierce ambition,
Assumes the reins, and drives the courser on,
With furious passion and unbridled lust?

LEO.

The emperor admits of no delay,
When once resolv'd.

EDOXIA.

Remember, Leo,
The blood that flow'd from Poplicola's veins,
From breast to breast through the Horatian line,
And thence to me convey'd—a gen'rous stream
That animates and warms Edoxia's heart,
Shall ne'er be tainted by a base submission.

LEO.

Impatiently, he waits thy last reply.

EDOXIA.

Tell him I'm not the coward fool he thinks;
That guilty greatness has no charms for grief;
I scorn his impious passion—detest his name.

LEO.

Yet save thyself—thus on my bended knee, [*Kneels.*
Let me beseech from thee a mild reply.

EDOXIA.

Tell him, a traitor's heart, though swell'd
By adulation's base perfume, has not a hand
To wield the imperial sceptre.

LEO.

And therefore needs thy aid,
Both to ſecure and dignify the throne.

EDOXIA.

This inſolence from thee!—the pious Leo—
My former friend—the guardian of my youth;
I thought thy ſoul caſt in a purer mould—
Above the ſervile line—not thus to court
And meanly grovel, for a tyrant's ſmile.
Leave me, baſe wretch—go fawn on thy new maſter;
Tell him at once, Edoxia dares to die.

LEO.

Forgive this boldneſs!—Alas! could I but ſave,
Or ſerve thy noble houſe, there's not a taſk
Edoxia could impoſe, this aged arm
Unnerv'd by time and grief, would not attempt.
Yet might as well the breath of wiſdom ſtrive
To reaſon down the tempeſt of the north,
Or lull the maddening hurricane to reſt,
As to perſuade when Maximus reſolves.
Oh! would kind Heaven, which ſav'd thee from the ſword,
Still find ſome way to bleſs and make thee happy.

[*Weeps.*

EDOXIA.

Thy venerable grief, my aged friend,
Softens reſentment, which thy zeal inflam'd:
In that kind tear the ſoul of Leo ſhines;
I ſay, is Rome ſo poor and abject grown—
So far debas'd, that when a ruffian dares
To ſtab his prince, and boldly challenge
To his impious bed, the wife of his
Aſſaſſinated lord—none dare oppoſe?

Has

Has Rome for this ſo often fought and conquer'd?
Has the beſt blood the Roman name can boaſt,
Redden'd the Tyber with its purple ſtreams,
To purchaſe freedom by the ſwift perdition
Of every bold invader, from Tarquin's reign,
To the more fatal day, when guilty Maximus
Aſſum'd the purple?—May thunders roll,
And ſtreams irruptive, blaſt a wretch like him—
Or ſheets of livid flame enwrap Edoxia
From his hated ſight.
Go on and bear this anſwer to thy lord. [*Exit* LEO.

Thou great firſt cauſe, who bids the tempeſt rage,
And rends with mighty peals, the darken'd air,
Light up the ſkies and blaze from north to ſouth,
Thy vengeance pour on complicated guilt. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

MAXIMUS *and* LEO *moving to the Apartment of the Empreſs.*

MAXIMUS.

HAH!—does the empreſs haughtily reject
My proffer'd vows, and ſpurn me from her arms?

LEO.

Loſt in the tender agonies of woe,
She wept, regardleſs of thy ardent prayer;
'Till grown outrageous by my urgent ſuit,
She ſtarted wild, as if deſpair awoke,
And rav'd, and ſob'd, and imprecated death:
At laſt, collected in majeſtick pride,

She

She drew a poignard from beneath her robe,
And ſolemn ſwore, in moſt indignant ſtrains,
If you preſum'd to ſpeak to her of love,
Its point transfix'd ſhould ſend her to the grave,
More welcome far than thy abhor'd embrace.

[*Scene opens and diſcovers* EDOXIA.

Enter MAXIMUS *and* LEO.

MAXIMUS.

I aſk thy hand, and claim thee as my queen—
Jointly to govern and reform the ſtate.

EDOXIA.

And muſt an empreſs bear this bold outrage—
Theſe ſtings of inſult?—Shall a villain's hand
Drag to the altar—ſacrifice my fame,
To each black paſſion that deforms the ſoul?
Oh! Heaven look down—his bold ambition curſe—
Deſtruction ſend on him and all his race.

MAXIMUS.

Did luſt of empire, or of fame alone,
Thus bid me urge the fair Edoxia's hand—
Ambition, that proud ſource of human woe,
Thou might'ſt ſuſpect had puſh'd my purpoſe on:
But though the luſtre of a crown allures,
And ſanction gives to deeds of boldeſt hue,
Juſtice alone, and love of virtue warms,
My ardent heart, and animates my arm.

EDOXIA.

Durſt thou profane the ſacred name of virtue?
A ſacrilegious murd'rer talk of virtue!
Thou know'ſt not what it means—an heart like thine
Ne'er felt its ſacred warmth—not an idea
Of the heavenly flame could e'er exiſt
In thy corrupted brain—blown up by luſt—
Revenge—

Revenge—ambition—death—
Thy dagger reeking with thy ſovereign's blood,
Thou ſtill would'ſt heighten thy deteſted crime
And make his wife a partner in thy guilt.

MAXIMUS.

Thou wrong'ſt me much—to plead my cauſe
Would wound ſo chaſte an ear;—falſe to his vows,
And faithleſs to thy bed, he wrong'd at once
The empreſs and myſelf.

EDOXIA.

Him, I forgive———
But not the aſſaſſin of my injur'd lord;
Oh! let me fly from thee, and from perdition.

MAXIMUS.

My deſtiny impell'd againſt my will,
My evil genius and my fate combin'd;
Nor will I now recede and yield a throne.
Thy wiſdom, grace, and dignity of ſoul,
Command reſpect, and bend me to thy charms;
I aſk thy aid to extirpate from Rome
Injuſtice—vice—with anarchy and crimes.
My gracious princeſs, ſovereign, queen and wife,
Reign ſtill in Rome, and grace the imperial throne.

EDOXIA.

Thy perfidy thou think'ſt is made ſecure
By plunging Ætius in the general wreck;
His valorous hand would from thine impious graſp
Have pluck'd the ſceptre, ſtained by thy touch:
Yes, if through Rome there was a Roman left
As brave as Ætius, the diadem
Would of itſelf drop off,
From thine imperious brow.

MAXIMUS.

Does not the empreſs know who murder'd Ætius?—
[*To* LEO.
And that Petronius would avenge his death?

LEO.

The bloody deed had not yet reach'd her ear,
When Valentinian fell.

EDOXIA.

It is enough, ſhe knows the miſcreant—
The proud uſurper of the vacant throne,
Who dares aſpire to Valentinian's bed;
But witneſs, all ye powers of earth and heaven,
Ere my ſoul bends to ſanctify the deed,
Or yields a victim to this bold offence,
The horrid void beneath the Tarpeian rock
Shall firſt be fed by all the Anician race.

MAXIMUS.

Prepare the rites—Edoxia muſt be mine—[*To* LEO.
Before the wood lark hails the morning dawn,
Or early matins call the virgins forth
To chant their lays—the empreſs is my bride—
Then time and love ſhall ſoften by degrees,
'Till Lethè lends forgetfulneſs to grief.
[*Exit* MAXIMUS *and* LEO.

EDOXIA.

Ye gods!—where am I?—
Shall I be aw'd by Maximus's frown
To ſtain the glory of the Horatian name?
Alas!—ye patriots of ancient fame—
Where are the youth, whoſe glorious fathers di'd
To ſave the commonwealth?
Ariſe! ye ancient, venerable ſhades,

Who

Who bravely fought for liberty and Rome :
Aſſiſt my powers—my ſingle arm ſhall dare
Some dreadful deed of horrid deſperation.
I ſwear by him who thunders in the ſkies,
By him who thunders in the vaulted ſkies,
And downward points the artillery of Heaven,
'Till worlds diſſolve beneath his dreaded frown,
The moſt diſtinguiſh'd vengeance ſhall befall
The Roman world, for Maximus's ſake. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

GAUDENTIUS *and* EUDOCIA.

GAUDENTIUS.

THOUGH nature frowns, and monſters howl around
And threat the bands of each domeſtick joy,
Yet innocence and truth ſhould ceaſe to weep ;
'Tis guilt alone ſhould tremble in the ſtorm.

EUDOCIA.

My native land diſtain'd with Roman blood
Warm from the veins of patriots and kings—
A father ſlain—a mother's tender woe—
Her virgin daughters weeping by her ſide,
Add ſtings to pain, and poignancy to grief.

GAUDENTIUS.

Let Angels guard and calm thy ruffled breaſt ;
Let love and virtue cheer thy drooping ſoul ;
And let thy peace reanimate again
A prince that lives but in Eudocia's ſmile.

EUDOCIA.

EUDOCIA.

Talk not of peace to the imperial houſe;
The hand, the dark aſſaſſinating hand,
That pierc'd th' unguarded heart of Valentinian,
Has murder'd all his race—hah! Gaudentius!

[GAUDENTIUS *trembles, and turns pale.*

Why trembles thus Gaudentius, at Valentinian's name?
A name he once rever'd, and call'd his friend—
Is it a probe that touch'd a ſecret wound?

GAUDENTIUS.

My love—my grief—my fears—
A ſudden illneſs that will ſoon ſubſide.

EUDOCIA.

Thy fears—why ſhould Gaudentius fear?

GAUDENTIUS.

For all my ſoul holds dear beneath the ſtars—
Thy peace—thy health—thy happineſs and love.

EUDOCIA.

Is there a latent cauſe, this moment wak'd,
To doubt Eudocia's love?

GAUDENTIUS.

Thy deep dejection—thy too curious eye—
A brow o'ercaſt with ſomething like a frown,
Ne'er ſeen before, where ſweetneſs ſits enthron'd,
And ſoft complacence has been us'd to ſmile,
Amidſt the grief that wrung the aching heart.

EUDOCIA.

Does thine own conſcience ſmile, and whiſper peace;
And art thou ſure that all's ſecure within?
I much ſuſpect, thy friend, Trauliſta,
Is a ſecret foe—and that his hoſtile hand,
Oft ſteep'd in blood—fierce as the vulture's fang,

Was

Was not inactive on that fatal day,
When the remorſeleſs ſword mow'd down as graſs
The faithful friends to Valentinian's houſe.
But Heaven forbid, that e'er the brave Gaudentius,
A good, a generous, noble minded prince,
Should join a murderous band—impoſſible!
I will not wrong thee thus—yet ſome ſtrange horror
Seizes all my frame—as if my father's ghoſt
Stood bleeding by, and chid this parley
With a parricide.

[EUDOCIA *turns abruptly to withdraw.*

GAUDENTIUS.

Oh! leave me not, my princeſs, thus ſuſpected.

EUDOCIA.

If thou art guilty, own thy crime at once;
A poor defence will make thee doubly ſo.
If the leaſt guilt contaminates thy ſoul,
My own would ſhare by hearing thy excuſe;
I ſee thee not till time reſtore thy fame;
And yet I fear—Oh! death to name—I fear,
Thy infamy is fix'd—forever fix'd,
Beyond redemption's call. [EUDOCIA *exit haſtily.*

SCENE V.

TRAULISTA *and* GAUDENTIUS.

TRAULISTA.

WHY does my friend wear that ſoft April eye?
What is it poiſons thy heroick ſoul,
And dumps the vigour of thy martial arm?

Brace

Brace up thy nerves, and fence about thy breaſt,
And ſcorn the boon of pity from a girl—
A haughty—ſtubborn—ſolemn Roman maid.

GAUDENTIUS.

A heart like thine—inſenſible to love—
Dead to the ſoft ſenſations of the ſoul—
Only to fierce Bellona's voice awake—
Though all the ſex were offer'd to thy choice,
Knows not the joy, nor feels the tender pang,
Fear may excite, or expectation raiſe.

TRAULISTA.

What haſt thou got by all thy love ſick dreams?
Go ſhew the mighty Goths thy baby face,
And ſee if one would know it was Gaudentius,
Who fought and conquer'd on the Danube's banks;
Tell them you've whin'd for more than twenty moons—
Creſt fallen, ſigh'd before a puling chit,
The daughter of thy moſt inveterate foe—
The murderer of thy ſire.

GAUDENTIUS.

But he's aveng'd—
And, like the frighted hare, ſhe fled my ſight,
Suſpects me an accomplice, charg'd me home,
With treaſon, murder, perfidy and blood.

TRAULISTA.

Come, be thyſelf again; nor longer baſk
Upon the ſilken, downy lap of hope;
Leave her to ſigh, and whiſper to the winds—
Elſe ſnatch by force, and bear her o'er the wilds,
Through growling foreſts—hideous, broken cliffs,
And frozen ſeas—to Scythia's icy banks,
Where rugged winds pour from the brindled north

Adown

Adown the mountain's brow—a blaſt may cool
The tranſports of thy love.

GAUDENTIUS.

Heaven blaſt a wretch, whoſe fierce barbarick heart
Would violate in thought ſo chaſte a fame—
A purity allied to heaven itſelf.
Alas! the charms that have ſubdu'd my heart
Have ſomething more than human in their birth.

TRAULISTA.

Then why profanely ſigh for charms divine?
Think thee of Bleda's hoſpitable dames,
Won without wooing—thine without a ſigh;
But if ye chooſe to wanton in the weſt,
And hang upon the dimpled ſmile of love,
A day, perhaps, or leſs, brings on the ſcenes
That level all the bars round birth and beauty,
Or innocence and elevated worth.

Thou may'ſt be ſafe e'en in the imperial court,
'Till ſurfeited with thoſe Italian ſmiles:
The blue ey'd mountain maids of Caucaſus,
(Who, once allur'd by native, artleſs charms,)
Call back thy ſighs to nature's utmoſt bounds,
The bolder beauties of the northern world.

GAUDENTIUS.

Forbear, Trauliſta—nor ſport thus with my pain.

TRAULISTA.

Come then, erect the ſcymitar of Mars,
And twang the bow ſtring at the trumpet's ſound.

GAUDENTIUS.

Go, clear my wounded fame—aſſure the princeſs
That I did not ſtrike—that her fair image,
Hovering round his head, held back my hand—

Repell'd

Repell'd the pointed ſword—for aught I did,
Her father might have liv'd.

TRAULISTA.

I know ye acted as a coward would—
But half reſolv'd, and trembling at thyſelf:
Yes, I will ſee Eudocia is inform'd,
She's made a poltroon of a noble prince.

GAUDENTIUS.

Hah!—this from thee?—yet know he has a ſword,
That will not fail to reach a villain's heart,
And let the venom out that rankles there.

[*Lays his hand on his ſword.*

TRAULISTA.

For this I love thee—come on and try its mettle—
I fear'd thou had'ſt forgot who was thy ſire,
And that the luſtre of his burniſh'd blade,
Wielded by him in many a hardy field,
Had hurt the opticks of the gentler ſon
Of noble Ætius.

GAUDENTIUS.

Draw and defend thyſelf.———*(Draws)*

TRAULISTA.

What ſhall I tell Eudocia, when ſhe chides,
If I ſhould ſcratch, or let out Roman blood? *(Inſultingly)*

GAUDENTIUS.

The empreſs comes—forbear—I, on the morrow,
Meet thee in the Circus.

TRAULISTA.

Come on, my boy—
The morrow may have other work to do;
This day ſhall tilt thee ſwiftly out of time,
If thou art weary of thy ſilken chain.

[*Exit* TRAULISTA.

Enter

Enter EDOXIA.

EDOXIA.

My ſon—my friend—my injur'd friend Gaudentius,
Canſt thou forgive the noble Ætius' death?
Thou lov'ſt Eudocia with the pureſt flame:
Remember Valentinian was her ſire,
Then vindicate the honour of her houſe.

GAUDENTIUS.

While life glows warm in this my faithful breaſt,
Eudocia holds my fortune and my fate.

EDOXIA.

I know thou'rt noble, generous and juſt,
And not leſs brave than Ætius thy ſire;
He wore a ſword, he dar'd to draw
In injur'd virtue's cauſe—nor fear'd the frowns
Of tyrants or of kings—it is thy birthright,
Durſt thou graſp it hard, and boldly venture,
For Eudocia's ſake, to extricate
Her mother from the arms—the hated bed
Of an uſurper of her father's throne?

GAUDENTIUS.

There's nought, true courage prompts the brave to do,
Or virtue juſtifies, or honour calls,
But what I dare attempt.
But if it mars the peace of Rome——

EDOXIA.

The peace of Rome is an ideal thing;
Loſt in the tide of every ſhameful vice,
Rapine and blood; and violence and luſt
But mock the ſtory of her ancient fame.
Canſt thou a moment balance in the ſcale
The tranquil ſcenes of harmony and peace,

With all the luſtre that adorns a crown?
Eudocia gives an empire with her hand.

GAUDENTIUS.

My ſword—my ſervices—my life are thine—
Ambition burns, and love and glory join—
Yet name no taſk that more diſtracts my country.

EDOXIA.

Then thou canſt ſee the empreſs bath'd in tears,
Drag'd by Petronius to the ſacred altar—
Compell'd to be his bride—the fair Eudocia,
But a moment lent, to dry the filial tear,
Ere ſhe's compell'd to wed his worthleſs heir?

GAUDENTIUS.

Not all the powers of earth, or hell combin'd,
Shall rob me of my wife, my lov'd Eudocia.

EDOXIA.

Wilt thou apply to Genſeric—my friend?

GAUDENTIUS.

A dangerous expedient indeed—
A faithleſs friend—a treacherous ally.

EDOXIA.

The time forbids evaſion, or excuſe—
Admits of no delay—my purpoſe is
Irrevocably fix'd.—Say, wilt thou,
At the port of Oſtia, meet Genſeric—
Bear him my ſignet—bring him on to Rome?

GAUDENTIUS.

Not for the golden treaſures of the eaſt,
Or all the wealth the tempting world beſtows;
No, though Eudocia were the bright reward,
Could I betray the capitol of Rome,
And ſell my country to the Vandal king?

EDOXIA

EDOXIA.

Wilt thou betray the mother of Eudocia,
And blaſt my hopes of moſt ſevere revenge?

GAUDENTIUS.

Though great thy wrongs, much greater muſt thou fear,
If Genſeric's rapacious brutal hoſts
Should enter Italy—my ſovereign forbear,
And like the gods, benignantly forgive;
Nor let reſentment kindle up anew
The flames of war; nor introduce in Rome,
Thoſe ſavage, hoſtile gueſts to riot there,
To ſubjugate the ſtate—ſubvert thy houſe,
To extirpate thy name, and rudely reign
And triumph o'er the Weſt.

EDOXIA.

'Tis done—I fear'd thy tardy ſpirit—
The laſt remains of patriotick virtue,
So like a glow worm in a ſtormy night,
It twinkles but to ſhew the ſable hue
By nature worn through all the midnight gloom.
A truſty meſſenger, I therefore ſent—
The winds have ſped, and brought him back to Rome;
And ere Petronius dreams of danger nigh,
Genſeric's thunder ſhakes the capitol.

GAUDENTIUS.

Thou haſt ſtruck deep—a ſure and deadly blow.

EDOXIA.

The tangled lion can't eſcape the toils.

GAUDENTIUS.

Nor thou—nor Rome—nor all thy houſe, perdition.

EDOXIA.

Secure thyſelf, and leave the reſt to me.

[*Trumpets without.*

GAUDENTIUS.

GAUDENTIUS.

Hark! the ſhrill trump!—Genſeric's herald
Cannot yet be nigh.———

EDOXIA.

Like a brave friend, he inſtantly prepar'd
To plant his banners round the towers of Rome.

GAUDENTIUS.

The ſenate—people—all the royal houſe,
For ſlaughter ripe, in its moſt dreadful form—
Proud Rome the ſeat of arms, and arts, and fame,
Stands tottering on the verge of mighty ruin.
A ſoldier's duty calls; I haſte away;
Fate may do much before we meet again;
She has a buſy hand, and ſwiftly rides
On revolution's wheel—Rome may be ſack'd,
And crowns and ſceptres toſs'd from ſhore to ſhore,
Tranſplanted, or deſpoil'd.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT

ACT V.

SCENE I.

The SENATE *assembled in the Palace.—Enter an* HERALD.

HERALD.

THE Vandal king, now at the gates of Rome,
Sends on an Herald to the magiſtrates,
The conſuls, and the prefect of the city,
The army, ſenate, and the Roman people,
Demand an audience in Edoxia's name,
And offers terms, on which fam'd Rome may yield
To Genſeric, and his all conquering ſword.
He comes to reſcue from the uſurper's arm,
The remnant of the Theodoſian line;
Chaſe from the throne the traitor Maximus,
And ſave the daughter of his great ally;
Give Italy a king of more reknown,
Or change the ſeat of empire from old Rome.

SENATOR.

Tell mighty Genſeric, Petronius yields,
Appall'd and frighten'd at his potent name.
He left the city, ſick of life and empire;
No more ambitious of the world's applauſe,
He wiſh'd to hide beyond the rapid Rhine;
But fate forbad—a bold Burgundian chief,
Arreſted his career, and cleft him down;
Amidſt the cries of citizens and friends,
Of foes to Rome, and of Edoxia's ſlaves.
His body, mangled by a thouſand wounds,
Was thrown contemptuouſly from Tyber's bank.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Opens and diſcovers the Citizens in great Confuſion—LEO *at the Head of a Proceſſion of Prieſts, Senators and Nobles, meet* GENSERIC *in ſuppliant poſtures, without the Palace.*

LEO.

EDOXIA ſends all health to Genſeric,
Her friend—her royal brother, and demands
Protection for the imperial houſe:
That no rough foot approach the palace gate,
Or hoſtile arm to plunder, or invade,
The royal daughters, or the wife of Cæſar.

GENSERIC.

Tell her that Genſeric himſelf will haſte,
To guard the princeſſes and Cæſar's wife.

LEO.

She begs repoſe after the furious ſtorm;
And thy permiſſion to be left retir'd,
To weep awhile the deſtiny of Rome;
To pour the balm of pity on the breaſt
Of virgin ſorrow—to lift the drooping head
Of undiſſembled grief—hung like the lily
O'er the waſted vale—when the rough ſurge's
Roaring deluge ſweeps down all around,
Except the naked bloom—propleſs and weak,
And quivering on the marge of the next tide—
Whoſe wat'ry wave may waſh the broken fragment
From its natal ſoil.

GENSERIC.

Hymenial ſongs muſt cheer theſe drooping maids—
They each ſhall chooſe a Goth or Vandal lord,

And

And raſe the lineage of the Roman name
In the warm grots of Aſdrubal and Hanno,
For which their anceſtors in Carthage bled,
And armies periſh'd in the Lybian ſands.

LEO.

Now thou art maſter of the Roman world,
Let clemency beſpeak thee more a king,
Than all thy triumphs o'er ſubjected Rome.

GENSERIC.

The multitude diſarm'd—I leave their lives;
Plebeian ſlaves may tremble and retire;
But all of noble or patrician blood,
Of ev'ry age and ſex, my priſoners are.
Go thou, and tell the empreſs to prepare,
Firſt, to receive her ſovereign in the palace—
Then with her daughters, follow him to Carthage.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

EDOXIA *and* LEO *in the Imperial Palace.*

LEO.

FORTUNE ingulphs thy family and throne,
Beneath her ſhifting tide they're floating down,
And for thine houſe my ſoul in anguiſh bleeds;
The capitol—thy crown—and freedom loſt—
Thy daughters ſeiz'd, Placidia borne away,
And made the miſtreſs of a Gothic lord,
And Genſeric himſelf is near the palace,
With hoſts of Vandals crowding in the rear.

EDOXIA.

EDOXIA.

No more—death to my eyes—the tyrant comes—
The chains prepar'd—I hear the ſhackles clank.
Ariſe ye furies, from Tartarus' gulf,
And drag him peace meal, to the infernal ſhades.

Enter GENSERIC.

Hah! traitor, is it thus thou meet'ſt Edoxia?
Rob'd of her crown—a homager to thee—
Strip'd of her robes—her diadem and wealth,
And rudely bid to quit my native clime,
Still more to ſwell thy fierce and ſavage pomp:
The princeſſes inſulted—and enſlav'd—
By vulgar hands drag'd to the Vandal tent.
Oh! burſt my heart—and let my eye ſtrings break,
Let furious billows ſwallow up his fleet,
And darkneſs cover nature in the wreck,
Ere I obey, and ſee my houſehould train,
Lag at the feet of his triumphal car.

GENSERIC.

A milder tone becomes a captive queen,
At whoſe requeſt invaded and ſubdu'd,
Rome proſtrate lies beneath her conquering lord.

EDOXIA.

Ah! what a contraſt to the ſplendid tale
Of Roman greatneſs—her illuſtrious fame.—

GENSERIC.

Empire decays when virtue's not the baſe,
And doom'd to periſh when the parts corrupt.

EDOXIA.

My ſoul's as hot with rage, remorſe, revenge,
As are the Lybian ſands when Sirius reigns,
Or the thrice heated ſummer ſolſtice burns.

GENSERIC.

GENSERIC.

Then, to conſole and mitigate thy rage,
I'll haſte to Tunis with the illuſtrious throng,
Where Hunneric, my ſon, ſhall wed Eudocia.

EDOXIA.

Oh! dreadful threat—ſeverer far than death.
Where are the ſacred, celebrated ſhades,
Who waſh'd the ſtains from chaſte Lucretia's fame
In red libations from a tyrant's heart—
Oh! ſhield Eudocia—ſnatch her from deſpair.
Reſcue a hapleſs, chaſte, and friendleſs maid
From baſe, abandon'd, proſtituted ſlaves!—

GENSERIC.

Fix'd as the fates that roll th' etherial orbs,
I now forbid a murmur, or a ſigh.

EDOXIA.

Thou may'ſt forbid the morning ſun to riſe;
Bid ocean ceaſe to lave the pebbled ſhore,
Or Roman ſouls to mix with Vandal ſlaves,
And be obey'd—ere ſighs are huſh'd,
Or execrations ceaſe.——

GENSERIC.

Each chief has ſeiz'd a princely Roman dame,
The booty's ſafe, and proſperous gales invite;
And now my guards eſcort the empreſs on.

EDOXIA.

What! thus commanded in imperious ſtrains,
To haſte from Rome to Africk's ſcorching realms,
Where Tophet gapes and ſlaughter'd infants cry,
By thouſands offer'd their infernal gods:—
Jehovah! why do all thy thunders ſleep—
While each black crime the demons perpetrate,
Is acted o'er by this infernal race.

GENSERIC.

GENSERIC.

Slaves, haſten on, and ſeize your royal charge,
And guard her ſafe to Carthagena's coaſt.

EDOXIA.

Down on my head th' avenging gods have pour'd
Each curſe the houſe of Hannibal could frame,
Or vanquiſh'd Carthage utter in deſpair,
For all the wrongs, oppreſſion, and diſgrace,
By haughty Rome, inflicted on her ſons.
Now ye ſtern ſouls, ye venerated ſhades,
Heroes who fell on Zama's routed plains—
Look down and triumph, vengeance is compleat,
Behold the laſt of the Horatian line,
Sent to the margin of the burning plains,
The tawny front of Afric's blacken'd tribes,
To ſtand an exil'd ſlave—to rave and weep
The loſs of empire and the fall of Rome,
Amidſt Numidia's ſands and ſooty ſons.
But thanks to Heav'n, the empreſs of the weſt
Has yet the means, and will an empreſs die.

[*Draws a conceal'd poignard, and attempts to ſtab herſelf.*

GENSERIC.

Slaves, ſeize her hand—ſhe muſt not die—
'Twill half defeat the triumph of the day.

EDOXIA.

Enough of life and all life's idle pomp—
Nor by a tyrant's fiat will I live—
I leave the buſy, vain, ambitious world
To cheat itſelf anew, and o'er and o'er
Tread the ſame ground their anceſtors have trod,
In chace of thrones, of ſceptres, or of crowns,
'Till all theſe bubbles break in empty air,
Nor leave a trace of happineſs behind.

[EDOXIA *is led off in golden chains.*

GENSERIC

GENSERIC, *from the Palace Gates, gives Orders to the Vandal Troops.*

Down with the Roman eagles, ſtatues, temples,
Monuments of fame—their trophies tear :—
Strip all the veſtments from their ancient gods—
Their pageant heroes level with the duſt,
And raſe their names from memory and time.
The golden ſhrines and ſaintly relicks ſeize ;
Both gilded buſts and roofs of bronze deſtroy ;
The branches, tables, candleſticks of gold,
In oſtentation ſhewn by Jewiſh prieſts,
And in triumphal pomp transfer'd to Rome,
With all the treaſures of Zenobia's houſe,
Palmyra's wealth, and Aſia's ſpoils, ſecure—
And teach the naked capital to weep,
Her long arrearages to all mankind,
For plunder'd nations, cities, kingdoms, climes.
What has this mighty Roman name to boaſt ?
'Tis time to raſe her from the liſt of nations,
And blaſt the world no more by Roman crimes—
Then plead preſcription, as 'twas done by Rome.
Break up their fountains, poiſon all their baths,
Ere they contaminate the Vandal troops
With ſoft, effeminate, luxurious ſloth ?
Ranſack each church, and pillage all the city,
Nor leave a drachma round the ſeven hills.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE IV.

HUNNERIC *and* TRAULISTA.

HUNNERIC.

IF or ambition, wealth, or airy fame,
Could ſooth to reſt, my ſoul would be at eaſe;
But yet ſome ſecret heavineſs I feel,
Ne'er felt before, that rankles at the heart,
And blaſts the joys of victory and conqueſt.

TRAULISTA.

The world, and all its treaſures at command;
And beauty, emulous to win thy love—
What can diſturb thy peace?

HUNNERIC.

Eudocia—the lovely, weeping, tender, fair Eudocia—
She is my prize—my priſoner—my wife—
Yet every motion of her eye appals;
And when ſhe ſpeaks, I like a ſtatue ſtare,
Unable to reply, or to withdraw.

TRAULISTA.

Theſe Roman maids have ſome enchanting arts,
That bend the boldeſt warrior to their ſmiles;
Yet they are not ſo cold as they may ſeem.

HUNNERIC.

She holds me by ſome faſcinating tie,
Spite of my proweſs, or ſuperiour ſtrength:
Did the celeſtial deities combine
To form her thus?—Her image makes me hate
The wanton beauties of our amorous clime.
In her majeſtick preſence, I'm as tame,

As

As the young lambkin in the ſhepherd's cot ;
I ſcarcely move me, leſt I ſhould offend ;
It may be love—I fear it is—
Yet ſpurn it from my thought—yes, I adore,
My worſhip is profound—my veneration ſuch
I'm tenfold more a ſlave than is the princeſs.

TRAULISTA.

Perhaps, ſome darling favourite indulg'd,
May find Eudocia ſoft as yielding air,
Though frozen to the blandiſhments of love—
Cold as the Scythian ſnows to thine embrace ;
Yet I could let a fatal ſecret out,
Would give a clue to wake her paſſions up.

HUNNERIC.

Ah ! ſay Traulista ;
Half my booty ſhall be thy reward ;
And fifty captives of the faireſt dames
Shall ſwell thy haram to the eaſtern ſtile.

TRAULISTA.

Know, all the ſex I equally deſpiſe ;
And did ſome buſy demon wake a wiſh
To toy and trifle with ſome matchleſs fair,
I'd puff it off;—if I could bluſh, the thought
Would burn my cheek.—Give me a Roman province,
Or give an army to patrole the empire,
To rid the world of their patrician pride,
Or yet more turbulent plebeian blood,
That has, for more than thirteen hundred years,
Plagu'd all mankind with their ambitious fires.

HUNNERIC.

Not leſs than thee, I hate the Roman name :
Command thy terms—though they're to govern Rome,
To wear a crown—to reign in Gaul or Spain ;

Both by the croſs, and by the ancient gods,
Here is my ſignet—claim thine own reward.

TRAULISTA.

What if within this garden lies conceal'd
The rival of thy love?

HUNNERIC.

The game more eaſy—more ſecure the prey:
By all the blood Genſeric's arm has ſpilt,
The traitor dies before the morning dawns.

TRAULISTA.

Belov'd and favour'd by the fair Eudocia,
The brave Gaudentius waits to bear her off.

HUNNERIC.

Hah! the ſon of Ætius?—thy valiant friend?—

TRAULISTA.

He once preſum'd to call his friend a traitor,
And thinks that mine is ſuch a milky ſoul
As to forgive—'tis not a ſoldier's trade:
My ſword, my arm, aveng'd his bleeding ſire,
Nor ſhall the ſon ungratefully defy
That ſword—that proweſs—that decided ſtrength
Rome's legions fear, and trembling armies fly.
But yet I bid reſentment ſleep awhile,
'Till all was ripe an empire to ſubvert—
I ſcorn to play at a leſs noble game.
I rais'd Petronius to the imperial throne;
But he, ungrateful, indolent and weak,
At once forgot Hermannic's noble ſon;
With vulgar princes rank'd him as a ſlave:
The empreſs ſaw, and wanted ſuch an arm,
To back the rage that rankled in her breaſt,
And rid her of Gaudentius, who'd refus'd

To

To be her friend and confident to thee.
He, raging mad with patriotick pride,
Reſign'd his love at freedom's ſacred foot,
Diſguſted—urg'd againſt her fix'd deſign,
And arm'd at once againſt the Vandal king.
She bade me hope, as my reward, her daughter—
But I've no wiſh the princeſs to poſſeſs;
Yet my ambition burns to reign in Rome.

HUNNERIC.

Nail this Gaudentius to ſome graſſy plot
And thou ſhall triumph in the capitol.

TRAULISTA.

This night is friendly to revenge and death:
Between the gloom of midnight and the dawn,
Juſt light enough beneath the cypreſs ſhade
To track the heedleſs lover on his way:
Yet could'ſt thou in Eudocia's preſence draw,
And lay her lover bleeding at her feet?
When ſhe to heaven erects her lily hand,
In all the beauteous agony of grief,
Heaves up her ſnowy breaſt, and ſighs—GAUDENTIUS!

HUNNERIC.

'Twould ſweeten my revenge, and ſteal my heart,
To drag her inſtant to my ſlighted bed.

TRAULISTA.

Then on and feaſt thee with the luſcious ſight;
A triumph worthy of a Vandal prince.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE V.

A Grotto in the Garden of the Palace—EUDOCIA *ſolus*—GAUDENTIUS *approaching.*

GAUDENTIUS.

THESE are the grots, the ſacred ſilent walks,
Where my Eudocia wanders from the world.
Methinks I hear, within yon roſeate bower,
Some plaintive angel's ſoft harmonious voice:
Perhaps, her guardian goddeſs down deſcends,
From yonder ſilvern cloud capt mountain's brow,
To watch her beauteous charge.————*(Liſtens.)*

EUDOCIA *within, in a ſoft, plaintive, agonizing voice.*

Oh! ſome kind ſeraph ſnatch my ſoul away,
And ſhroud my griefs beneath the peaceful tomb;
Or muſt a dagger ope a paſſage hence,
To ſet me free from Hunneric's embrace?

GAUDENTIUS.

'Tis ſhe herſelf—'tis her ſymphonious voice:
The murmuring maid in broken accents ſighs;
'Tis my Eudocia whiſpering to her God.
[*Enters the Grotto.*
Let not thoſe ſighs tear up an angel's breaſt;
Nor let the wreck of empire ſtrike too deep.

EUDOCIA.

Hah!—who art thou that boldly dares intrude
On the laſt hour of this my ſtill retreat?
Some ſpy of Hunneric's, to watch my ſteps,
Leſt one ſhort moment of repoſe I find,
This laſt ſad night, ere I'm completely curs'd.

GAUDENTIUS.

GAUDENTIUS.

May all the powers who guard the good and juſt
Protect my princeſs!—

EUDOCIA.

Hah! my belov'd Gaudentius!—
Doſt thou yet live, through all the perils
Of a barbarous ſiege, to ſee Eudocia
Snatch'd from thy lov'd arms?—Alas! my fate,
To what a hated rival am I doom'd!

GAUDENTIUS.

I had not liv'd but for Eudocia's ſake.

EUDOCIA.

Yet ſave a life much dearer than my own;
Nor linger here, 'tis on the verge of death:
Leave me to periſh in my country's fall.

GAUDENTIUS.

Not all the clangor, or the din of arms,
Or roughen'd tempeſts, whoſe impetuous blaſts,
In fiery bolts, may rive the mountains up,
Again ſhall tear me from my lov'd Eudocia.

EUDOCIA.

My lips can't utter, nor my tongue expreſs,
The anguiſh that my tortur'd ſoul endures:
'Twas early duty nurs'd my infant love,
And ſtricteſt virtue ſanctifi'd the flame,
'Till Valentinian fell—alas! no more;
Nature—religion—reaſon—filial love,
Forbid a union with the ſon of Ætius.

GAUDENTIUS.

My brain grows hot—it kindles to diſtraction—
This night ſecures my bliſs—or—certain death.

EUDOCIA.

Oh! live Gaudentius—live for Rome's defence;
Nor rob thy country of ſo brave an arm.

Not crowns, or ſceptres, or the world beſides,
Has aught to balance with my love for thee;
Yet urge no more—fly hence and ſave thyſelf—
One parting ſigh—one ſolemn, laſt adieu—
Then, for thy country's ſake, forget Eudocia.

GAUDENTIUS.

Not till the pulſe of life forgets to play,
And death's cold dews pervade my quivering lip.
Within this garden will I find a grave,
Unleſs my princeſs dares an enterpriſe,
Which loſt this night, may never more return;
I muſt attempt thy reſcue ere the morn.

EUDOCIA.

In what new horror would this ſcene involve?

GAUDENTIUS.

Arouſe thy noble fortitude of mind—
'Tis the deciſive hour—the next ſubjects
To Hunneric's embrace.——

EUDOCIA.

Not all that nature ſhudders at in death,
Has half the terrors that his name conveys;
Oh! ſave, if poſſible—prevent my fate.

GAUDENTIUS.

Then fly with me from miſery ſupreme.

EUDOCIA.

The port of Oſtia's ſhut—and all the ſeas
Fill'd with Genſeric's fierce piratic ſlaves:—
Where can the wretched fly?

GAUDENTIUS.

Fly any where from Hunneric and death.

EUDOCIA.

Alas! my heart—my weak, my wavering heart!

GAUDENTIUS.

GAUDENTIUS.

Come, let us move to yonder ſmall alcove;
The brave Trauliſta, whom Genſeric truſts,
Moſt fortunately heads the nightly watch,
Patroles the poſts until the morning dawns;
The moment that the midnight bell reſounds,
He brings a Vandal garb for my Eudocia,
And aids our flight to the Tarentine ſea.

EUDOCIA.

Trauliſta!—I like not this Trauliſta—
Trauliſta has a rough, a ſavage ſoul,
Wrought up to treaſons of the darkeſt hue.

GAUDENTIUS.

His life he owes to Ætius and myſelf.

EUDOCIA.

But gratitude can never bind the baſe:
An infidel to God—there is no tie—
No principle to bind a worthleſs heart.

GAUDENTIUS.

Hs is my friend; come, diſſipate diſtruſt.

EUDOCIA.

A thouſand ſpectres ſtare on every ſide.

GAUDENTIUS.

Let's loſe no time, nor let thy fears retard;

[*He offers to lead her out of the Bower.*

The hazy moon enwraps her tranquil face,
And hides behind a thin tranſparent cloud,
Leſt ſhe betray, by her reſplendent beam
Thy trembling ſtep—the terror in thy eye.

[*Moving ſlowly on.*

EUDOCIA.

Methinks I hear ſome ſpeedy foot advance.

[*She ſtarts back.*

GAUDENTIUS.

GAUDENTIUS.

My generous friend anticipates the hour.

EUDOCIA.

Lie ſtill, my heart—
Nor burſt the brittle caſement of my breaſt.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Away, my lord—fly to the thickeſt ſhade,
Or, ere thou can'ſt eſcape, thou art undone.

GAUDENTIUS.

Hah! betray'd!—

SERVANT.

Two ruffians arm'd, crawl round the citron walk—
They nam'd Gaudentius—I ſtay'd to hear no more—
But ruſh'd—and ſhot acroſs the darken'd grove,
To ſerve the princeſs and to ſave my lord.

GAUDENTIUS.

Alas! my faithful Caſſio—thou'rt too late,
Yet as a ſoldier will I ſell my life.

Enter HUNNERIC *and* TRAULISTA.

[GAUDENTIUS *makes a furious paſs and mortally wounds* TRAULISTA.]

TRAULISTA.

Death to my hopes—damnation to his hand!—

GAUDENTIUS.

Oh! heavens! Trauliſta—art thou the villain—
Traitor—daſtard—ſlave—lurking in ſecret,
To betray thy friends?

TRAULISTA.

Coward, come on—
To brave in words thou may'ſt a dying man;
Yet know I've life enough to daſh to hell,
And ſend thy puny ſoul to Pluto's ſhades,
For daring once to threat Trauliſta's life.

GAUDENTIUS.

GAUDENTIUS.

High heaven has levell'd at thy treacherous heart
The fatal ſtroke that juſtice' hand demands.

TRAULISTA.

Now are there deities or devils—ghoſts or gods,
I'd thank them all had he have dy'd before me.
My eye balls ſink—my ſtiffen'd fibres fail!—
Haſte, Charon—with thy boat—and ſet me o'er
The Stygian pool—blot out this being—
'Tis a curſe to man—yet if theſe Romans live
In other worlds, I would exiſt again,
To chaſe them from Elyſium, as from Rome. [*Dies.*

HUNNERIC.

Seize this young furious prince, and on the rack [*To his*
Extend each limb—with heated pincers tare, *Guards.*
'Till I have time to find new tortures out.

GAUDENTIUS.

Not thee, nor death, nor tortures do I fear,
Would angel guards and miniſters of fate
Firſt ſnatch Eudocia from thy loath'd embrace—
Yet know, Gaudentius dies not as a ſlave.

[*He ruſhes forward and engages* HUNNERIC, *who mortally wounds him.*—EUDOCIA *runs between their ſwords, and offers her breaſt to* HUNNERIC.]

EUDOCIA.

Strike here, moſt noble Hunneric—end my pain—
Now if thy ſoul can do one generous deed
Emancipate thy priſoner—enhance the gift—
Nor like a niggard do thy work by halves;
But let me die with him, my life, my lord,
My huſband, my Gaudentius.

HUNNERIC.

No, my Eudocia, live—thou art my queen.

EUDOCIA.

EUDOCIA.

If hell's dark empire had a charm for me,
Then I might wiſh to be the Vandal queen.

GAUDENTIUS.

Adieu, my fair—adieu, my lov'd Eudocia—
Adieu to glory, empire and renown!———[*Falls.*

EUDOCIA.

Oh! ſtay Gaudentius—let me aſſuage thy wounds,
Support thy drooping head one moment more—
Then I accompany my much lov'd lord. [*She faints.*

HUNNERIC.

Slaves, bear her off—theſe are the ſex's tricks—
While her fond eyes hang on her paramour
She'll play them o'er, and weep, and ſigh, and rave,
And faint again—yet cannot die with grief—
But in mine arms ſhe'll ſink an eaſy bride.

EUDOCIA.

Heaven blot from time that curs'd, that blaſted hour!
[*The guards attempt to force her from the corpſe of* GAUDENTIUS.]
Off murderers—nor tear me from his corpſe—
Let me come near—if ſtill he breathes,
And ſip the laſt ſoft breath.—Ah; he is dead!
In his laſt ſob—the laſt of Romans died—
Juſt Heaven is kind—I yet ſhall die with him.
My throbbing heart almoſt forgets to beat—
The ſlow pulſation lags—I ſink—I fall—
Time ſhakes the glaſs to ſift out my laſt ſands—
Virtue, ſublim'd by piety and truth,
Now beckons to the ſkies—the curtain falls,
And opes eternity—I've nought to aſk
Of this diſtracted world—but juſt to ſhrowd
In the ſame peaceful tomb, with my Gaudentius.—[*Dies.*

EPILOGUE.

EPILOGUE.

POETS and heroes travelling from home,
For perfect models, oft repair to Rome;
Yet real proweſs, or true ſterling wit,
Or genius there, they do not always hit.
They had their bullies, ſycophants and fools,
And learned dunces in Apollo's ſchools;
Their poetaſters—pretty playful things,
Who, patroniz'd by ladies, or by kings,
By rules logiſtick, reaſon'd truth away,
And form'd new ſyſtems fit for each new day;
Zealots, or bigots to their fathers' creed,
As infidels, or faſhion gave the the lead;
A proud republick, or a ſervile throng,
Aw'd by a frown, or by a Nero's ſong;
A celebrated, brave, heroick race,
They'd ſave, or ſell their country, for a place.
For liberty—a poor unmeaning name,
They ſhook the globe, and ſet the world in flame;
But, factious, fickle, impious and bold,
Enervated by luxury and gold,
Ye've ſeen extinguiſh'd—great Apollo's fire,
Untun'd his harp, and broke his ſacred lyre.
But in this age of literary claim,
When taſte and genius vie with Roman fame,
Like them ye'll read, and candidly excuſe
A piece deſign'd for pleaſure or for uſe;
Though both the unities *of place and time*
May'nt always tally with the true ſublime,
Nor buſkin merit meet the mid day ſky,
A female bard ſtill aſks your candid eye.

Sure

Sure the politeneſs of an infant nation
Wont damn *the play, and hiſs it out of faſhion;*
At the firſt reading on an winter's eve
Pray cry encore—*a ſecond may retrieve,*
And ſave her fame from ev'ry critick's rage
To tread ſecurely on Columbia's ſtage.
No cenſuring bards, or little wits ſhe fears,
If ye are pleas'd, and Peter Pindar *ſpares.*
The author aſks but this ſmall boon of you,
Pray let it paſs at leaſt a night or two;
And if the moral in this pious *age*
Should let it live a week upon the ſtage;
Some gambling fools by Maximus's *fate*
Might learn their follies ere it was too late.
Might ſtay at home and ſave their pretty ſpouſes,
And horns prevent by lodging at their houſes.
Others, by thinking, might be taught the odds,
'Twixt him who fears and him who blaſts the gods;
Might chooſe to live and die a man of merit,
Ere he'd be damn'd—an infidel of ſpirit;
But, like Trauliſta's, *let their follies end,*
Who baſely have betray'd or ſold a friend.

THE LADIES of CASTILE.

A

TRAGEDY,

IN

FIVE ACTS.

To a YOUNG GENTLEMAN *in* EUROPE, *at whoſe Requeſt a regular* DRAMATICK WORK *was firſt attempted.*

MY DEAR SIR,

YOU have often requeſted ſomething in the ſtile of the drama, from the hand of one ever fond of gratifying her friends; though not certain whether this requeſt aroſe from a love of literary productions; from a curioſity that has affection for its baſis; or the ſtrong attachment of friendſhip; yet I have no doubt you will be pleaſed with the compliance.

I AM ſenſible the writing an unexceptionable Tragedy, requires judgement, genius, and taſte; and have felt ſuch a diffidence in the attempt, as nothing would have overcome but the repeated requeſt of a very dear friend.

THOUGH the piece now put into your hand may not afford equal entertainment with the compoſitions of a Corneille, a Racine, or a Crebillon, yet I dare ſay, from your partiality, you will find pleaſure in your cloſet, though it ſhould not be *encored* on the ſtage.

YOU

You have never named me a ſubject, though you prohibited an American, and ſeemed to have no predilection in favour of Britiſh incident; therefore, notwithſtanding events in the weſtern world have outran imagination; notwithſtanding the magnitude of proſpect a riſing empire diſplays, and the many tragical ſcenes exhibited on an iſland whence it derived its origin, I have recurred to an ancient ſtory in the annals of Spain, in her laſt ſtruggles for liberty, previous to the complete eſtabliſhment of deſpotiſm by the family of Ferdinand.

The hiſtory of Charles the fifth, the tyranny of his ſucceſſors, and the exertions of the Spaniſh Cortes, will ever be intereſting to an American ear, ſo long as they triumph in their independence, pride themſelves in the principles that inſtigated their patriots, and glory in the characters of their heroes, whoſe valour completed a revolution that will be the wonder of ages.

What a field for genius! What a diſplay of capacity, both in ſcience, in buſineſs, and in politics, does this revolution exhibit! Certainly, enough to fire the ambition, and light up every noble ſpark in the boſom of thoſe who are in the morning of life.

THE nations have now reſheathed the ſword; the European world is huſhed in peace; America ſtands alone:—May ſhe long ſtand, independent of every foreign power; ſuperiour to the ſpirit of intrigue, or the corrupt principles of uſurpation that may ſpring from the ſucceſsful exertions of her own ſons:—May their conduct never contradict the profeſſions of the patriots who have aſſerted the rights of human nature; nor cauſe a bluſh to pervade the cheek of the children of the martyrs who have fallen in defence of the liberties of their country.

PERHAPS the ſubject I have choſen for the machinery of a tragedy, may be more proper for an epic, than a dramatic poem; yet I hope it will be acceptable in its preſent garb, and that the candor of the public will be exerciſed, not ſo much for the ſake of the ſex, as the deſign of the writer, who wiſhes only to cultivate the ſentiments of public and private virtue in whatſoever falls from her pen.

I AM moſt affectionately, Yours,

M. W.

February 20, 1784.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

DON VELASCO—*Regent of Spain in the abſence of Charles fifth.*

CONDE HARO—*Son to Velaſco, Commander of the royal Army.*

DON JUAN DE PADILLA—*Commander of the Troops raiſed by the States of Spain.*

DON FRANCIS—*Friend to Padilla, Brother of Donna Maria, in love with Louiſa.*

DON PEDRO GHIRON—*a young Nobleman in love with Louiſa.*

ZAMORA—*Biſhop of Toledo.*

SOCIA—*confidential Servant to Don Juan de Padilla.*

WOMEN.

DONNA MARIA—*Wife of Don Juan de Padilla, Siſter to Don Francis.*

DONNA LOUISA—*Daughter of Don Velaſco.*



THE LADIES of CASTILE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Near Toledo.

DON JUAN DE PADILLA *and* DON FRANCIS.

DON FRANCIS.

THE furious courſer liſts his dauntleſs head,
Fierce ſnaps the bit, and rolls his eye abroad,
Sees death and carnage mark th' empurpled field,
Neighs for his prey, and tramples o'er the dead.
The happy ſteed may bite the blood ſtain'd ground,
Untaught by reaſon, ſympathy or love—
Unconſcious of the pains—the ten fold pangs,
That check the warrior in his bold career.

DON JUAN DE PADILLA.

Methinks ſome languor hangs about thy ſteps,
Too like deſpair, though not alli'd to fear;

When

When virtue arms, and liberty's the prize,
No cloud ſhould ſet on brave Don Francis' brow.
The love of glory, victory and fame,
A noble ſenſe of dignity and worth,
Is the beſt birth right of Caſtilia's ſons :—
Inur'd to glory, and the feats of war,
Our fathers held their freedom from the gods.
A jealouſy for freedom kept alive
Precludes the ſofter paſſions of the mind.

DON FRANCIS.

Nurs'd in the fierce and hoſtile field of war,
I, from long anceſtry, may boldly claim
That innate force and vigour of the mind
Which mocks the ſenſe of danger or of death ;
But yet Louiſa wakes my ſoul to love.
De Haro's ſiſter has ten thouſand charms ;
But ah !—the daughter of Velaſco chills,
And horror opes the gates of wild deſpair,
As if the fates forbad a diſtant hope.

DON JUAN DE PADILLA.

Spurn theſe ſoft fetters—fly the fond diſguiſe,
Ere it unnerves the vigour of thine arm—
Let freedom be the miſtreſs of thy heart :—
She calls to arms, and bids us draw the ſword :—
Come, clear thy brow, and whet the pointed ſteel,
To cruſh the foes of liberty and Spain.

DON FRANCIS.

I would ſuſpend, but ne'er exterminate
The nobleſt paſſion of the human ſoul ;
That ſoftens the ferocious breaſt of man,
And checks the ruder billows of the mind.

DON JUAN DE PADILLA.

Not like the lover, but the hero talk—
The ſword muſt reſcue, or the nation ſink,

And

And ſelf degraded, wear the badge of ſlaves.
We boaſt a cauſe of glory and renown;
We arm to purchaſe the ſublimeſt gift
The mind of man is capable to taſte.
'Tis not a factious, or a fickle rout,
That calls their kindred out to private war,
With hearts envenom'd by a thirſt of blood—
Nor burns ambition, rancour, or revenge,
As in the boſom of ſome lordly chief
Who throws his gauntlet at his ſov'reign's foot,
And bids defiance in his wanton rage:—
'Tis freedom's genius, nurs'd from age to age,
Matur'd in ſchools of liberty and law,
On virtue's page from ſire to ſon convey'd,
E'er ſince the ſavage, fierce, barbarian hords,
Pour'd in, and chas'd beyond Narvaſia's mount,
The hardy chiefs who govern'd ancient Spain.
Our independent anceſtors diſdain'd
All ſervile homage to deſpotick lords.

DON FRANCIS.

I own my weakneſs—yet forgive my love;
My life and honour ſacredly I plight,
To aid a brave and veteran band of chiefs,
Whoſe fathers fearleſs, dip'd the glittering ſword,
Whet with revenge, in tides of Mooriſh blood,
To ſave their ſons from ſervitude and chains.

DON JUAN DE PADILLA.

But we have not a moment's time to loſe.
The pageant mounted on his gilded car,
Sweeps all the fickle multitude along:
Inaction or delay will ruin all,
And place the fav'rite nurs'd in fortune's lap,
Beyond the reach of aught but heaven itſelf,

To

To teach him what from man to man is due.
A battle ere tomorrow's ſun retires
Shall ſhew the world our pedigree and fame;
The Celtiberian race ſhall ne'er be ſlaves,
Nor bluſh to own Don Juan for their ſon.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Palace of VELASCO.

Enter DON VELASCO *and* CONDE HARO.

DON VELASCO.

THE brighten'd dawn lifts up its cheerful face;
The ſun beams play to lighten thee to fame;
The hill tops ſmile, and each propitious gale,
Wafts victory onward, with expanded wing,
To crown the glory of Velaſco's houſe.

CONDE HARO.

Unhappy Spain, by civil factions torn,
Aſſaulting friends, while foreigners invade.
Her burning cities, and her reeking ſons,
Are drench'd in blood, our valour ſhould protect;
While fierce diſunion ſcowls on every brow,
And rancour whets the ſword againſt ourſelves,
The Turkiſh banners ſpread the German plains,
And France, reſolv'd to humble Charles's pride,
Unites the creſcent with the ſacred croſs.

DON VELASCO.

Francis indeed may triumph at our gates,
Unleſs Don Juan, and the reſtleſs Cortes,

Are

Are ſoon ſubdu'd, and peace reſtor'd to Spain.
One glorious conflict, one ſucceſsful day,
Will ſhew the world the heir of Ferdinand
For empire born, in ſpite of all his foes.

CONDE HARO.

The ſword is drawn, and down the gulph of time,
Perhaps, its uſeleſs ſcabbard may be toſs'd,
'Till years roll on, and revolution's wheel
Whirls nations down, and empire ſweeps away,
Ere peace benignant ſmiles on hapleſs Spain.

DON VELASCO.

Then loſe no time to cruſh this rebel race.

CONDE HARO.

The nobleſt blood that ancient Spain can boaſt,
Thrills through their veins, and warms their gallant
With great ideas of liberty and law. [chiefs
They claim the rights their ancient ſires poſſeſs'd,
When, ere allegiance ſworn, or fealty paid,
They bade the ſov'reign recollect the claim,
That each, as good by nature as himſelf,
Were, when united, arm'd with power replete,
To ſmite the brow, and daſh the ſcepter'd hand
That dare invade the meaneſt ſubject's right.

DON VELASCO.

'Tis but a faction of cabal and ſtrife,
Bound by no ties of dignity or worth;
Devoid of honour, diſcipline, or faith;
Diſcord will waſte, and jealouſy divide,
And drive them backward from the routed field,
Diſpers'd by thee, as duſt before the wind.

CONDE HARO.

Inur'd to arms, my ſoul's eſtrang'd to fear;
Yet I lament my fate;—my ſire and prince,

Point

Point me to glory, combating my will,
And make my duty lead to deeds I hate.
This conteſt is no democratic rage,
No lewd tumultuous fury juſt let looſe—
Dauntleſs and bold as fam'd Numantia's ſons,
They wield the lance and bear the target high,
And boaſt their ancient independent race;
Unfold their pedigree, in freedom's line,
E'er ſince for liberty, the haughty Celts
In blood conteſted with the furious Goths.

DON VELASCO.

Methinks ſome latent cauſe beclouds thy ſoul
And checks the vigour of thy val'rous arm,
Retards thy glory, and may blaſt thy fame.

CONDE HARO.

Not leſs reſolv'd, or fearleſs than thyſelf,
No tongue ſhall e'er reproach thy houſe or name
With glory tarniſh'd, by De Haro's fall
From valour, virtue, dignity, or fame,

DON VELASCO.

Then haſte, and chaſe theſe miſcreants from the land—
Cut down their line, and blaſt their idle hopes,
And extirpate the bold ſeditious race.
Their houſes wrap in one devouring flame—
The ſword ſhall quell all factions in the land.

CONDE HARO.

When virtue's vanquiſh'd, juſtice bids us ſpare,
And lend compaſſion to an hapleſs foe.
I ne'er will tinge the field with human blood,
If milder means can bloodleſs victory win.

DON VELASCO.

Adieu, my ſon—my ſoul is all on fire.

Proud,

Proud glory waits to make thy name immortal,
By promis'd triumphs ere the morrow close.

DE HARO.

Urg'd on by thee, by glory and renown,
I'll serve my sov'reign as a soldier ought,
And take the field against my former friends,
But in the hero ne'er forget the man. *[Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

DON JUAN DE PADILLA *and* DON PEDRO.

DON JUAN.

THE kingdoms of great Ferdinand are left,
To hunt for crowns in Germany and France,
While here Velasco plunders all the states.
Our delegates have yesterday return'd,
Without an audience at the sov'reign's court;
Stop'd on the way—forbid on pain of death,
With their complaints—their idle tales of wrong—
T' invade the regal dignity of thrones,
Or whisper murmurs in a monarch's ear.
Resentment, and a noble thirst of fame,
Must rouse the bold, reanimate the brave,
And brace the arm with vigour to repel
These bold invasions on great nature's rights.

PEDRO.

Has then the band of Dutch and Flemish race,
Who hover round, clos'd up the monarch's ear,
And steel'd his heart against the cries of Spain?

Ambition low'ring on a lordly brow
May yet ſubdue the citizens of Spain.

DON JUAN.

Valencia arm'd, and Arragon arous'd,
Hold their's and Caſtile's righteous cauſe the ſame.
The trump of war is echo'd through the land,
Wrought up to tempeſts by the cruel arm
Of baſe oppreſſion, breaking o'er the mounds
Of law—of juſtice—equity and truth.
Is thy mind firm—irrevocably fix'd,
Or, to ſecure the ſacred rights of Spain,
Or die a martyr in her glorious cauſe.

PEDRO.

The ſtorm beats high—yet, will I hazard all,
My honour, fortune, freedom and my fame:—
I, by thy ſide, all danger will defy.

DON JUAN.

Then reconnoitre round De Haro's poſts;
The noble houſe of Albert's overcome,
Navarre's ſubdu'd—diſmantled all her towns—
Peaſants and nobles, citizens and ſlaves,
Promiſcuouſly enroll'd in Charles's pay,
Sullen and fierce, diſdain th' ignoble ſervice:
Ripe for revolt, they, at my ſignet join,
And liſt themſelves in a more noble cauſe:
Prepare their leaders for tomorrow's work.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE IV.

DON JUAN DE PADILLA *and* DON FRANCIS.

FRANCIS.

HAST thou yet ſeen th' unhappy queen of Spain?
The vulgar ear, forever caught by ſound,
Allur'd by pomp, by pageantry and ſhow,
Revere her perſon and adore her name;
Her ſtandard planted on the field of war,
Would ſanction give to every bold deſign.

DON JUAN.

I have beheld the ruins of a queen,
A ſight too piteous for a ſoldier's eye—
Whoſe heart, unſteel'd by ſcenes of human woe,
Has yet a tender corner left for grief.
Rob'd of her crown, authority and peace—
Dethron'd, immur'd, neglected by her ſon,
Shut up in widow'd ſolitude to weep
Ungrateful Philip, who deſpis'd her charms,
She's but the weeping image of deſpair.

FRANCIS.

Does ſhe yet know the miſeries of Spain?—
The indignant wrongs and injuries we feel,
Beneath the reign of her oppreſſive ſon?—

DON JUAN.

She, all attentive, liſten'd to the tale;
And rous'd at once as from lethargic dreams,
And ſtarting, cry'd—is Ferdinand no more!—
Is that great monarch ſlumbering in the tomb,
While I, a wretched priſoner of ſtate,
Stand the ſad monument of human ills?—

She

She wept and ſigh'd, till ſtrong reſentment roſe,
And kindled in her breaſt a noble flame.
With all the powers of eloquence and truth,
I ſtrove to ſooth her wandering mind to reſt.
In juſtice' ſacred name I urg'd her aid
To counteract the cruelties of Charles,
To reaſſume her rights, and reign again,
To extricate her ſubjects from deſpair;—
She gave aſſent with dignity and eaſe,
And, ſpite of nature, ſeem'd to be a queen.
I nam'd Calabria's injur'd noble prince,
The heir of Arragon, long ſince depriv'd
Of his paternal crown, and princely rights,
Which Ferdinand, by violence, had ſeiz'd,
And juſtice bade his daughter to reſtore;
I urg'd her marriage with ſo brave a prince,
Entitled, both by virtue and by blood,
To wield the ſceptre that his fathers won,
And ſhield her perſon from all future wrongs;
But naming love, her dormant paſſions wak'd,
And kindled up her former flame for Philip;
She ſunk deſpondent, and refus'd to aid,
To act in council, or to guide the realm.

FRANCIS.

Unhappy queen! thus to her people loſt.
In melancholy's cell, let her remain,
While her ſon raves at large about the world,
Not leſs a madman than the Macedon,
Who kindled up the Grecian world in flame,
And rear'd a pile o'er all his murder'd friends.

DON JUAN.

She, reſcu'd from her guards, my priſoner is,
And, if we need, her ſignet is obtain'd.

DON

FRANCIS.

But malice whiſpers murmurs through the camp,
And half our ſoldiers clamour for their pay—
At leaſt a part, before they take the field.

DON JUAN.

Haſte to Maria, whoſe undaunted ſoul
Reflects a luſtre on her feeble ſex;
By ſtratagem, ſhe's gain'd an ample ſum
To quiet mutiny, and pay the troops.
But ere the ſolemn midnight clock ſhall ſtrike,
Return, and meet me at the gate of Toro. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

DON FRANCIS *and* DONNA MARIA.

MARIA.

TO make atonement for the guilt of men,
Altars are dreſs'd, and ſaintly relics ſhine:—
Inſtead of real ſanctity of heart
They churches decorate with coſtly gifts:—
But reaſon, burſting from a ſable cloud,
On a bright throne erects her regal ſtand,
And gives new ſanctions from the voice of God,
To free the mind from ſuperſtition's reign.
No fables, legends, dreams, or monkiſh tales,
Shake my firm purpoſe, or diſarm my mind,
When duty calls to make my country free.
The churches' treaſures were our laſt reſort,
And, join'd by all the matrons of my train,
In weeds of woe, and ſable garments dreſs'd,

I kneel'd before the conſecrated ſhrines,
And aſk'd a bleſſing on my country's cauſe;
But 'twas to him whoſe ſanction ſeals the claim,
Of peace and freedom to the human race,
I bow'd my ſoul, and rais'd my ſuppliant prayer,
That when a ſpark from chaos' womb had burſt,
And light diffus'd o'er all the weſtern world,
It might not be to gild a tyrant's car,
And make mankind the pageants of his will;
I then diſmantled all the ſacred ſhrines.

FRANCIS.

Hah!—durſt thou venture on ſo bold a deed!—
Leap prieſtly bounds—invade the churches' rights—
Diſrobe the ſaints, and riſque the public hate!—

MARIA.

Neceſſity muſt ſanctify the deed.—

FRANCIS.

Thy ſoul was form'd to animate the arm
Of ſome illuſtrious, bold, heroic chief,
And not to waſte its glorious fire away,
Beneath the weakneſs of a female form.

MARIA.

Men rail at weakneſſes themſelves create,
And boldly ſtigmatize the female mind,
As though kind nature's juſt impartial hand
Had form'd its features in a baſer mould:
But nice diſtinctions in the human ſoul,
Adopted follies, or inherent vice,
May be diſcuſs'd in calmer times than theſe:—
We'll reaſon then—if poſſible regain
Whatever nature, or its author gave.
But Juan waits, and fortune's on the wing:
The fickle goddeſs waves her gloſſy plume,

And

And holds an era in the life of man,
When all is hung ſuſpended on his choice;
Election made, judiciouſly he ſtands
On the proud ſummit of all human fame;
But judgment once erroneouſly form'd
Oft fixes his ill fate through life's career;
While a ſtrong current bears him down the tide,
And wrecks his peace on every ripling ſtream.

The morn may ſmile propitious on our cauſe—
May make us free, or more completely ſlaves:—
Unrive the manacles, or drive the bolts,
And clank the ſhackles round the Spaniſh world.
Canſt thou forget the ſoft Louiſa's tears,
And chaſe her brother through the field of blood?
Thou, like a lion leaping on his prey,
Muſt aim thy javelin at De Haro's heart.

FRANCIS.

Name not Louiſa—I would forget ſhe lives—
Or that ſhe is the ſiſter of my foe.
Miſtaken man!—he deprecates this war
That lights his country in a waſting flame;
But thinks the era of her freedom loſt,
Since firſt Ximenes' artful ſubtile wiles,
Threw ſuch a weight in the deſpotic ſcale;
A ſtanding army at the ſov'reign's nod,
Which makes the monarch maſter of the laws,
And gives at will both liberty and life.
Yet Conde Haro has a noble ſoul,
Nor is leſs virtuous than truly brave.

MARIA.

Virtue muſt ſpring from the maternal line
If it adorns the Conde Haro's breaſt.

Don

FRANCIS.

Tomorrow proves him what the world reports,
And weaves a garland to adorn his brow,
Or leaves his trunk a headleſs ſacrifice,
To ſtamp freſh glory on Don Juan's name.

MARIA.

Go, haſten on, and not a moment loſe;
Remind the ſoldiers of Segovia's rights—
Review the battles fought on Ebro's banks—
Aſſure them all is ſafe, if they're but brave.
The ſword maintains what their forefathers won.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT

ACT II.

SCENE I.

An Alcove in an artificial Wilderneſs.—DONNA LOUISA, *ſola.*

THE burniſh'd hills o'erlook the verdant dales,
And nature's deck'd in all her bright array.
The whiſpering breeze plays o'er the dappled mead,
And fans the foliage on the flowery bank :—
The towering wood lark trills her tender note,
And ſoft reſponſive muſic cheers the lawn ;
Yet here I wander wilder'd and alone,
Like ſome poor baniſh'd fugitive who ſeeks
The meagre comfort of a moſs grown cave.

Enter DONNA MARIA.

MARIA.

Awake fond maid—nor thus ſupinely waſte
Thy youth—thy bloom. Thy matchleſs beauty fades
Mid'ſt ſorrow, ſighs, and unavailing tears.

LOUISA.

Thought feeds my woes, nor can my reaſon aid
To calm the paſſions of my grief torn breaſt,
'Till concord weaves again her palmy wreath,
To deck the face of this diſtracted land.

MARIA.

Though weak compaſſion ſinks the female mind,
And our frail ſex diſſolve in pity's tears ;
Yet juſtice' ſword can never be reſheath'd,
'Till Charles is taught to know we will be free ;
And learns the duty that a monarch owes,
To heaven—the people—and the rights of man.

Let

Let him reſtore the liberties of Spain—
Diſmiſs the robbers that arreſt his ear—
Thoſe penſion'd plunderers that rudely ſeize
What nature gave, and what our fathers won.

LOUISA.

I retroſpect, and weep Spain's happier days—
Survey the pleaſures once we call'd our own,
When harmony diſplay'd her gentle wand,
And every peaſant ſmil'd beneath his vine—
'Till nature ſickens at the ſad reverſe,
And my ſwoln boſom heaves with ſmother'd ſighs,
Too big to be repreſs'd.—I yield to grief
'Till floods of tears relieve my tortur'd ſoul.

MARIA.

Maria has a bolder part to act—
I ſcorn to live upon ignoble terms—
A ſupple courtier fawning at the feet
Of proud deſpotic nobles, or of kings.

LOUISA.

Had I thy firmneſs, yet my heart would bleed
To ſee my country torn by civil feuds.
Each hero hurls a javelin at the breaſt
His heart reveres, and friendſhip's ſoul recoils
When the bold veteran urges home the blow,
To pierce the man he venerates and loves;
While the brave patriot parries back the ſhaft
Againſt a life that virtue's ſelf would ſave.

MARIA.

This ſad neceſſity—this painful ſtrife,
ould reunite the citizens of Spain;
d rouſe each languid arm with tenfold zeal
To point the thunder at a tyrant's head,

Ere

Ere yet the lingering mind indignant ſinks,
Debas'd and trembling at a deſpot's frown.
Rather let cities that ſupport his reign,
Like Torbolatan yeſterday reduc'd,
Be ſtorm'd and ſack'd before tomorrow's dawn;
And thus be taught the weakneſs of the mind
That dare a moment balance in the ſcale,
A crown for kings—with liberty to man.

LOUISA.

But ah, Maria!—this little ſelf obtrudes;
I cannot boaſt diſintereſted grief;
Louiſa's tears can never ceaſe to flow.
If brave Don Juan wins a glorious day,
My father—friends—and family are loſt;
If victory for loyalty declares—
Or if Don Francis—noble Francis, falls—
Is there a name from Caſtile to the Rhone,
So wretched as thy friend—thy lov'd Louiſa?

MARIA.

Thou ſhould'ſt have liv'd in mild and gentler times,
And breath'd, and ſlumber'd in the lap of peace,
As innocent and ſoft as infant love,
When lull'd to reſt by a fond mother's ſong:
The ſmiling babe, wak'd by the wind's rude breath,
The pearly dew drop trickles from its eye,
'Till ſooth'd to quiet by its favourite toy;
But for myſelf—though famine, chains, and death
Should all combine—nay, ſhould Don Juan fall—
Which Heav'n forbid—I ne'er will yield,
Nor own myſelf a ſlave.—But ſee thy lover,
Penſive, walks this way.—Adieu, my friend,
I muſt be gone—the buſy moments call—
My mind is fraught with cares of high import. [*Exit.*

SCENE

SCENE II.

Enter DON FRANCIS *and* DONNA LOUISA.

FRANCIS.

LET hope return and ſpread her ſilken wing,
And ſmile beneath the canopy of love;
The heav'n born mind, where virtue ſits enthron'd,
Should be ſerene, nor waſte itſelf in ſighs.

LOUISA.

Talk not of love, while ſympathetic pain,
And keeneſt ſorrows, rive the boldeſt heart;
While thouſands fall at freedom's ſacred ſhrine,
And bathe her pedeſtal with the rich blood
Of the beſt ſoldiers that the world can boaſt;
While the fond wife droops o'er her dying lord,
And orphan'd babes, and widow'd matrons weep,
Thrown helpleſs, on a cold, ungrateful world,
As pitileſs as winter's frozen hand.

FRANCIS.

For human woes my heart has often bled—
Yet dry thy tears, and calm thy ruffled mind—
Anticipate my bliſs, and bid me live:—
Oh! give thy hand, and plight thy ſacred vow,
Ere war's hoarſe clarion ſummons to the field,
That nought but death ſhall tear thee from my arms.

LOUISA.

Why wilt thou urge and importune my vows
While all my ſoul is agony and grief?—
Name love no more, till peace ſhall bleſs the land;
When redden'd wrath no longer lifts the ſword,
Dip'd to the hilt in rancour's baneful ſtream—

That

That the ſteel'd heart may deeper plunge the blade,
Without a ſigh—when from the gaping wound,
Out ruſhes, ſtaring, the aſtoniſh'd ſoul
Of his lov'd friend, or of a brother ſlain.
Ah!—whither do I rove—let me retire,
Leſt I betray the weakneſs of my heart.

FRANCIS.

O might I claim that tender trickling tear,
And call thoſe ſighs my own—they'd waft me on
Towards the field of fame, with freſh blown hope,
That ere tomorrow's ſun engulphs his brow,
And cools his ſteeds beyond the weſtern main,
I might return victorious to thine arms,
And lay my trophies at Louiſa's feet.

LOUISA.

And what theſe trophies—but a brother's ſpoils!
Who is the victim thy ſucceſs would doom
To infamy—diſgrace—deſpair and death?

FRANCIS.

Ah! there's the pain—the ſharpeſt pang I feel
To lift the ſword, and tread the hoſtile ground.
The Conde Haro is a virtuous foe.

LOUISA.

The Conde Haro—is—Louiſa's brother—
The only heir of Don Velaſco's houſe—
And if he falls—fate ſevers us forever.

FRANCIS.

Forever!—revoke the ſentence ere it reaches heaven.

LOUISA.

Forever. Remember this, and ſpare De Haro's blood.

FRANCIS.

But, if in battle he ſhould bravely fall—

LOUISA.

A ſtern, enrag'd, inexorable ſire,
Might hold Louiſa guilty of his death.

FRANCIS.

Juſt Heaven forbid!—Could he arraign a mind
As pure and ſpotleſs as the infant morn?

LOUISA.

Velaſco is to royalty alli'd,
A feudal lord, of ancient pedigree;
In rank, in wealth, in fame, the firſt in Spain;
His high ſwoln pride burſts forth in peals of rage,
Whene'er he talks or names the rebel chiefs;
Forbids his ſon to ſpare a ſingle life,
If fortune makes him maſter of the field:—
Think then what agonies pervade my breaſt.

FRANCIS.

When honour calls, and juſtice wields the ſword,
True virtue ſpares, and clemency forgives;
But when a fierce, tyrannic luſt of ſway,
Deforms the ſoul, and blots out nature's ſtamp,
The wolf, or tyger, prowling for his prey,
Is leſs a ſavage than the monſter man.

LOUISA.

No more, my lord—I ſink beneath the ſtorm;
The jarring paſſions tear my feeble frame—
My filial duties make the firſt demand;
Yet, ſpite of theſe, a group of paſſions riſe,
Love—friendſhip—fear—compaſſion and deſpair,
Alternate rend, in ſpite of reaſon's ſway.
Amidſt the ſtorm, the kind De Haro comes,
And with a ſmile, ineffably ſerene,
With all the ſoftneſs of fraternal love,
He cries—forbear to think of me again,

Or

Or that thy brother hazards fame or life,
Againſt the valour of a dearer name.
Alas!—how weak my trembling heart's become—
Oh!—what has my unguarded tongue diſclos'd!

FRANCIS.

What makes me bleſs'd beyond the power of fate.

LOUISA.

Deception oft beneath a flimſy veil,
Hides human hearts, nor lets man know himſelf.
Should fortune ſnatch the victory from thee—
Thyſelf—thy friends—and freedom loſt at once—
Perhaps you'll curſe, in agonies of grief,
Louiſa's houſe—her venerated ſire—
Her noble brother—and yet more I dread—
Yes—my lip trembles at the riſing thought—
The hapleſs daughter of thy cruel foe.
Is thy love proof againſt this teſt ſevere?—

FRANCIS.

Deſcription would but beggar love like mine;
Meaſure the earth and mount beyond the ſtars,
There's nought below can bound its full extent;
Not death itſelf can blot thee from my heart.

LOUISA.

Then am I thine!—witneſs ye heavenly powers!—
This is the ſignet of thy wedded wife; [*Gives him a ring.*
In the laſt exigence weigh well its worth,
And claim thy life from Don Velaſco's hand.
This was the pledge of his Zelinda's faith:
Knowing the ſallies of his haughty ſoul—
In a fond moment of paternal love,
He kiſs'd my cheek, and caught my trembling hand,
Fix'd on my finger this invalu'd gem,

And

And by a ſolemn oath he bound his ſoul,
To grant each prayer when this ſhould plead its claim.

FRANCIS.

Language is poor, and time itſelf would fail
To ſpeak the raptures of my grateful heart.

LOUISA.

What have I done—my filial love,
And the connubial ties—at variance ſet—
A brother's life againſt a huſband's ſtak'd—
My country's weal, with loyalty at war—
Confuſion—tumult—death and ſlaughter reign;
As if the demons leap'd Tartarus' bounds
To ſport with miſery and grin at pain.

FRANCIS.

Heaven has the means to extricate from woe,
Though veil'd from man—if patience waits his will:—
When fortitude, her ſiſter virtue joins,
They both triumphant, meet a juſt reward.
Adieu, my love—my duty bids me haſte;
[*Trumpets without.*
Soon I return, victorious from the field,
And claſp an angel to my faithful breaſt. [*Exit.*

LOUISA, *ſolus.*

——————He's gone!—
I feel the parting ſtroke ſevere indeed—
As if his lips pronounc'd a laſt adieu.
Now all ye powers ſupreme, ſupport my ſoul;
Teach me to brave the conflicts of the world
In this extreme diſtreſs—nor let me ſwerve
From honour's path, or virtue's ſtricteſt rule;
Nor let my conſcience once upbraid my ſteps. [*Exit.*

SCENE

SCENE III.

CONDE HARO, *ſolus.*

DE HARO.

VELASCO's will, back'd by the king's command,
I muſt obey, or blaſt my riſing fame,
And hazard all in the precarious cauſe,
Of freedom, ſtak'd againſt the power of kings:
Yet warring paſſions tear my tortur'd ſoul;
Diſcordant hopes make me a wretch indeed.
I love Maria—I revere her lord—
And almoſt wiſh the vict'ry may be his;
Yet if he falls—he falls as Brutus fell,
In the laſt ſtruggle for his country's weal;
While my ſucceſs will rivet faſt her chains,
Eraſe each veſtige of her ancient rights,
And make me odious in Maria's eye.
And ſhall I foſter this inglorious flame?
A hopeleſs paſſion gnawing on my peace,
And cankering my ſoul againſt the man
I once eſteem'd my friend—though now a foe,
He's virtue's friend where'er he meets her name.
The moral ſenſe, that checks the wayward will,
Now witneſs bear—I'm maſter of myſelf:—
I'll meet him in the field on equal terms;
No baſe deſire, or any lawleſs wiſh,
Shall more obtrude to interrupt my peace:—
But honour, juſtice, duty to my king,
Shall wield my ſword, and lead to ſpotleſs fame. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

DON JUAN DE PADILLA *and* DONNA MARIA.

DON JUAN.

FIRST of thy ſex—thou miſtreſs of my heart—
Not all Heſperia can boaſt a fair
So amiably ſoft, diſcreet and wiſe;
With ſuch a firm, heroic, noble ſoul,
Why ſhould a tear bedew thy lovely cheek?

MARIA.

I ſee diſtreſs on every ſide I turn;
Some ſad dejection marks the ſoldiers brow;
Though veterans in arms, they fear the king,
And tremble at the frown of majeſty:—
The nobles all, though emulous of fame,
Are jealous, proud—are turbulent and raſh—
The people fierce, yet ever prone to change.
Today the cap of liberty's toſs'd up—
Tomorrow torn and given to the winds,
And all their leaders, by the fickle throng
Are ſacrific'd by violence, or fraud.

DON JUAN.

So far above the weakneſs of thy ſex,
Let me beſeech thee never to deſpair;—
Support thy courage, arm thy noble mind—
Sure never more did thy Padilla need
Thy wiſdom, counſel, fortitude and zeal,
To animate amidſt ten thouſand cares.
But my firm purpoſe never can be ſhook;
While life glows warm within my beating breaſt,
I will defend, againſt the proudeſt foe,
The liberties of Spain, my country's rights.

MARIA.

MARIA.

So dangerous a foe has Spain ne'er ſeen
Since from the brindled North, the ſavage hords
Pour'd from their frozen hives, where gendering ſtorms
Have ruſh'd, and ſwell'd fair Ebro's banks with blood.

DON JUAN.

We have been free e'er ſince the mighty Goths,
In barb'rous ſwarms, compell'd the peaceful ſwain
To bare his breaſt, and meet the ſtranger's ſword;
The raw and hardy peaſants of the field,
Train'd up to arms, inur'd to feats of war,
Op'd their full veins, and waſh'd in native gore
The field, the village, and their father's tombs,
Ere they eſtabliſh'd liberty and peace.
Their ancient victories ſhall be recall'd
By the warm fluid from Don Juan's heart,
Ere he'll ſubmit to drag about this ſhell
Through nature's ſyſtem, as an uſeleſs drone,
Or live the ſlave of any lawleſs power.

MARIA.

O Heaven forbid!—nor daſh my country's hopes;
Or premature, cut down before the noon
A life of glory and heroic worth,
And blaſt ſucceſs, while virtue lifts the ſword.

DON JUAN.

Sure life protracted is a vulgar wiſh,
Unleſs ſome noble end blows up the flame.

MARIA.

Spite of myſelf, I have betray'd a tear;
But feel my courage brighten by thy ſide;
Nor ſhall the weakneſs of my ſex again,
Create a fear that may diſturb thy peace.

DON JUAN.

Haſte back, my love, leſt ſome miſhap befal;
The good Zemora guards Toledo's gates
With vigilance and faith;—there thou art ſafe.
Protect my ſon, and guard his infant years;
In his young boſom nurture every truth,
'Till ripen'd worth and manly virtue glow,
And mark him thine and thy Padilla's ſon.
The haſty moments fly—I muſt away—
I riſque a battle on the morning dawn.

MARIA.

O may we meet again with brighter hopes!—

DON JUAN.

We meet again with glory and renown—
Or, meet no more.——

MARIA.

——Or meet no more!
The dread idea ſtiffens every nerve.

DON JUAN.

Let no ill omen'd word eſcape thy lip.
Fair freedom ſtands, and waves her laurel high;
She, on the acme of her burniſh'd throne,
Shall hail the morrow with applauding ſhouts,
And greet Maria, as the guardian queen
Of union, peace, and liberty to Spain.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE V.

DON JUAN DE PADILLA *and* DON PEDRO.

PEDRO.

TOLEDO's banners reach the pendant ſkies,
And kiſs the winds, and hail the work begun:
I ſicken for the ſignal to the field,
When a deciſive conflict muſt enſue;
I burn, I languiſh, till the tyrant falls,
With all the flatt'rers that ſurround his throne.

DON JUAN.

Be temperate in words, but bold in deeds;
Moſt men are brave till courage has been try'd,
And boaſt of virtue till their price is known:—
But thirſt of gold—the curſed thirſt of gold,
Which plunder'd Mexico of all its wealth,
And broil'd her valiant ſons in queſt of more,
Is a ſeverer tyrant of the mind,
Than coarſer vice that mark'd our ſimpler ſtate,
Ere cruel Spain explor'd that diſtant world.
Then golden bribes corrupted not the mind;
No ſon of Caſtile, or of Arragon,
E'er ſold his honour, or relinquiſh'd fame,
For ſoft refinements that flow in with wealth,
Nor ſtoop'd to wear the liv'ry of a ſlave.

PEDRO.

Let not a coward, or a knave be ſpar'd,
Who ſhrouds his head from danger or from death,
When freedom's cauſe ſtands trembling on the ſword.

DON

DON JUAN.

Tomorrow gives a glorious teſt of worth;
Courage will ſhine conſpicuouſly bright,
Or guilt may ſhake and daſh the nerveleſs arm,
That draws a ſword to maſſacre the brave.

PEDRO.

Virtue's fair image then will ſhield thy head,
And animate the man who dare be free.

[*Flouriſh of trumpets, and alarm without.*

DON JUAN.

The hoſtile clarion ſummons to the field.

[PEDRO *greatly agitated.*

Hah!—pale and trembling at the trumpet's ſound!—
Pedro, haſte on, and take thy deſtin'd poſt,
'Twill lead to glory, conqueſt, and to fame;
To ſure renown, if valour guides thy arm;
But certain infamy, diſgrace and death,
If treaſon lurks beneath the guiſe of zeal.

[*Exit* DON JUAN.

DON PEDRO, *ſolus.*

Curſe on Don Juan's penetrating eye—
He's prob'd my ſoul—ſuſpects I am a villain:—
'Tis true that envy of his fame at firſt,
Bound the bright helmet on Don Pedro's brow,
And not the bubble freedom—empty name!—
'Tis all a puff—a viſionary dream—
That kindles up this patriotic flame;
'Tis rank ſelf love, conceal'd beneath a maſk
Of public good. The hero's brain inflates—
He cheats himſelf by the falſe medium,
Held in virtue's guiſe, till he believes it juſt:
But the vile rabble—the plebeian race,
Made for the yoke, bend like the ſervile mule,
And own mankind were made for ſlaves to power.

A waxen

A waxen pillar in the central point
Of ſol's meridian beams, melts not ſo faſt,
As will their army waſte by court intrigues,
By fraud, by bribes, by flattery and fear:
A ſlow campaign enſures ſucceſs to Charles—
A weak, plebeian, diſcontented band,
Will ſoon grow weary, and deſert their chiefs.
I will retard, embarraſs, and delay;
Sow diſcord round, while they inactive lie:
Then fly ſecure to Don Urano's roof.
My ſire deteſts this noiſy factious rout,
And opes his arms to welcome my return;
And Don Velaſco pays a noble price—
His price would bribe a prince to quit his crown.
Let nations ſink—poſterity be thrall'd—
Vice reign triumphant—liberty expire—
May I but humble haughty Juan's pride,
And gain Louiſa—as the bleſs'd reward.

Exit.

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE I.

CONDE HARO *and* LOUISA.—(DE HARO *arm'd and equipt for battle.)*

LOUISA.

ALAS my brother!—
Already arm'd—the burniſh'd helmet on!—
The hoſtile trump awakes from broken ſleep
Before the bird of morn has hail'd the day.
Falſe glory throbs within thy beating breaſt—
Thy lifted ſword diſplays its whetted point,
Not to diſpel the fierce, barbarian Moor,
Or chaſe the alien from theſe blighted ſhores:
It wounds the ſons—the citizens of Spain.

DE HARO.

Upbraid me not—nor ſharpen thus the pangs
That rankle here, and wound thy brother's breaſt.
Words cannot paint—nor can Louiſa feel,
The agonizing pains that pierce my heart.

LOUISA.

What can diſturb the hero arm'd for fame?—
The prince's favour, and his father's love,
Anticipate the glory he purſues.

DE HARO.

The ſecret dies within De Haro's breaſt,
Unleſs ſome ſtrange, fortuitous event,
Should heal my heart, and reinſtate my peace.

LOUISA.

LOUISA.

O might I weep my weary life away,
And close mine eyes on misery at large!—
Yet I could bear my griefs tenfold enhanc'd,
If this might heal, or mitigate thy pain,
Or sooth the anguish of a brother's heart.

DE HARO.

Bear up thyself against the storms of life—
The sharpen'd pangs of disappointed love.

LOUISA.

Canst thou forgive th' involuntary sigh,
The starting tear—that, as an April morn,
Pours down in torrents and obscures the sun?

DE HARO.

I know the secret thorn that wounds thy peace.

LOUISA.

I would conceal the weakness of my heart;
Yet not from thee—but from a sterner eye.

DE HARO.

Blush not, Louisa—'tis a noble flame,
And Francis' virtues merit all thy love.

LOUISA.

Yet he's thy foe—the brother and the friend
Of noble Juan—and can this lead thy hand—
This gentle hand—bath'd in a sister's tears,
To plunge thy dagger in a hero's breast,
From whence may rush a most exalted soul,
Adorn'd with every grace that wins the heart,
Or dignifies the man?———

DE HARO.

Great souls—form'd in the same etherial mould,
Are ne'er at war—they, different paths

Of glory may purſue, with equal zeal;
Yet not a cruel, or malignant thought,
Or rancorous deſign, deform the mind.
I much eſteem Don Juan and his friends,
But numerous ties engag'd my ſword to Charles,
And gratitude had bound the buckler on,
Ere I was nam'd the champion in his cauſe:
Yet if ſucceſs my loyal purpoſe crowns,
Mercy ſhall ſpare, where juſtice don't condemn;
Believe Louiſa, not Don Francis' life
Is more thy care than it ſhall be my own.

LOUISA.

The indiſcriminating arrow flies,
And often wounds where friendſhip's arm would ſave;
Should war's uncertain chance make him thy captive—

DE HARO.

The monarch and the laws muſt then decide.

LOUISA.

My bleeding heart anticipates my fate:
Oh! what a bubble 'tis, ye glory call—
Miſtaken name—a phantom of the brain,
That leads the hero on to leap the bounds
Of every ſocial tie—till blood—till death,
Spreads horror over nature's frighted face:—
Ambition rears his fierce and furious fang—
In grizly treſſes jealouſy attends—
'Till diſcord reigns, and civil fury burns,
And arms the ſon againſt a father's life,
Or plants a poignard in a dearer heart.
Oh! how ſeverely mark'd my hapleſs fate;
The beſt of brothers whets the dagger's point—
The fondeſt huſband wields the ſharpen'd lance,
And both are aim'd at ſad Louiſa's breaſt.

DE

DE HARO.

Thy huſband!—hah—raſh maid—

LOUISA.

Yes—by each ſacred tie.——
Thus incoherent my diſtracted prayer,
Prophanes the altar when to God I bow;
I ſtart—I tremble—leſt kind heaven grant
The boon I aſk. Affrighted at myſelf,
I call it back, and quick revoke my wiſh,
Leſt it involve me in ſupreme diſtreſs.

[*Trumpets and martial muſic without.*

DE HARO.

A day decides—the trumpet ſounds to arms;
Tomorrow will diſcloſe new ſcenes of woe,
Or ope the gates to happineſs and peace.

LOUISA.

My heart's too full—it bends me to the grave:
My anger'd ſire ſuſpects—he ſolemn moves,
Majeſtically grave—with awful brow,
And chides ſevere whene'er I meet his eye;
Oh!—could I hide forever from his frown!—

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE II.

DON VELASCO *and* DONNA LOUISA.

VELASCO.

FOND fooliſh maid—what ſecret guilt's conceal'd,
That thus in tears—all penſive and alone,
Thou ſeek'ſt to hide, e'en from a father's eye?—

LOUISA.

Alas! I weep for human woes at large:—
I weep my country and my hapleſs friends.
Man, the vile ſport of reſtleſs paſſion, roves
Through ſad inquietudes and painful cares,
'Till his ambition ſets the world on fire.
'Mongſt all the ills that hover o'er mankind,
Unfeign'd, or fabled, in the poet's page,
The blackeſt ſcrawl the ſiſter furies hold,
For red ey'd wrath, or malice to fill up,
Is incomplete to ſum up human woe;
'Till civil diſcord, ſtill a darker fiend,
Stalks forth unmaſk'd from his infernal den,
With mad Alecto's torch in his right hand
To light the flame, and rend the ſoul of nature.

VELASCO.

But moſt of all, a daughter is a curſe,
Whene'er ſhe lets her wanton thoughts run looſe.
Weak maid retire—in thy apartment hide,
Nor dare to ſhew thy weeping face abroad,
'Till war ſhall ceaſe, and buſineſs gives me time
To crown thy nuptials with a noble lord,
To whom thou art betroth'd—who claims thy hand;

Thou

Thou ſhalt be his—when from the field are chas'd
Theſe bold conſpirators—I've pledg'd my faith.

LOUISA.

Let thy Louiſa wake compaſſion up.

[*Falls on her knee.*

Revoke thy vow, and let me live a maid.

VELASCO.

Both by the hoſt, and by St. Peter's key,
I've ſworn, nor will revoke my plighted faith;
Prepare thyſelf for wedlock's ſacred vows;
One week completes the matrimonial tie.

LOUISA.

O let me live in ſome dark hermitage,
Or in ſome gloomy cell—I'll cloiſter'd die,
But can't this once obey my father's will.

[LOUISA *trembling and faint*—VELASCO, *enraged, leads her off.*

SCENE III.

DON JUAN DE PADILLA *and* DON FRANCIS.

FRANCIS.

ALAS! my lord, an unexpected blow!
But thou'rt prepar'd for all that fate can do,
Too great to fear—too good to be diſmay'd.

DON JUAN.

So well I know the ſhifting tide of life,
I'm not appall'd whene'er its ebb runs off,
And leaves man ſhallow'd on the oozy ſtrand.

FRANCIS.

Tordeſilas is ſeiz'd—the queen betray'd—
Don Pedro fled, and join'd the emperor's troops.

DON JUAN.

No genuine faith, or patriotic worth,
Had ere a place in his corrupted breaſt.
While juſtice holds the golden ſcales aloft,
And weighs our glorious cauſe with equal hand,
And bids each valiant chief ſupport her claim,
Needleſs the aid of Pedro's daſtard arm.

FRANCIS.

High heav'n in wrath ſupports the royal cauſe,
And gives ſucceſs o'er Charles's foreign foes;
E'en Solyman the great, fatigu'd with war,
Of Muſtapha afraid, ſighs to return
To Roxalana's captivating charms,
Agrees a truce, and leaves th' Hungarian plains.

DON JUAN.

Reſentful, brave, and nurs'd in valour's ſchool,
Francis ſtill waits him at the Pavian gate.

FRANCIS.

The king of France, whoſe evil ſtars combine
To give his rival empire o'er the world,
Has loſt a battle at the Pavian gate,
And languiſhes a priſoner to Charles.

DON JUAN.

Hah!—is Francis made the fickle ſport of fortune?
A ruder game the wanton never play'd,
To ſtrip the wreaths, and blaſt a monarch's fame.
Muſt Gallia's generous, brave and valiant king,
Do homage for his crown at Charles's feet?
If victory declares on freedom's ſide,
My arm ſhall aid in all his juſt demands.

Ere

Ere Ferdinand had ſeiz'd the neighbouring crowns,
He form'd a ſyſtem to enſlave mankind:
But Charles improves on his deſpotic plan;
Yet one campaign, one ſignal victory gain'd,
May ſhake the tyrant from his triple throne,
And once again, o'er the European world,
Relight the torch by tyranny obſcur'd.
But if his cruel ſword at laſt prevails,
Europe will bleed from Tagus to the Scheld,
Beneath his barb'rous perſecuting race.
We then muſt ſtrike one bold deciſive blow;
The rights of man were reſcu'd by the ſword,
From Nimrod down to Cæſar or to Charles—
Haſte on this moment and rejoin the troops.

FRANCIS.

At freedom's pedeſtal I've laid my hopes,
The brighteſt boon of life—my promis'd bride—
My lov'd Louiſa's charms;—to be her lord,
I would not riot in her arms a ſlave. [*Exit* FRANCIS.

SCENE IV.

DON JUAN DE PADILLA, *ſolus.*

DON JUAN.

THIS day decides, and gives the world to Charles,
And plunges Spain in darkneſs and deſpair;
Enwraps the mind in ſuperſtition's veil,
While freedom dies on his all conquering ſword;
Or ſpreads victorious her expanded wing,
And ſhrouds the rights which reaſon lends to man.

I give

I give my life a cheerful ſacrifice ;
'Tis a juſt debt my country may demand.
And if I fall in ſuch a glorious cauſe,
I'll boaſt my lot ;—let future pens record
Don Juan's arm once ſhook a tyrant's throne.
'Twas on the ſpot, where now Toledo ſtands
Our anceſtors defeated Pompey's troops ;
And in the height of Rome's exalted fame,
Numantia's plains have ſmok'd with Roman blood.
E'en in the zenith of republic pride,
The virtuous Scipio found it no mean taſk,
To ſubjugate Numantia's warlike ſons ;
Nor does our blood ſo cold and languid run,
That we have not the courage to be free.
The loan of life I only hold a boon,
When freedom lights to glory and to fame ;
But when ſhe ſits beneath a naked ſhrine,
With moſs grown treſſes o'er her furrow'd brow,
And lays her laurels at a tyrant's feet,
Let vulgar ſouls embrace the ſervile chains,
And adulation baſk in courtly ſmiles,
'Till liberty herſelf expires in tears.—
My ſpirit's unſubdu'd—I'll ne'er ſubmit :
I yet muſt play a noble, glorious game,
That ſhakes the ſceptre, or ſecures a grave.

[*Tumult, and noiſe of battle, without.*

[Exit.

SCENE

SCENE V.

Shouts of victory, hurry and confuſion.—DONNA MARIA, *ſola.*

MARIA.

THE clarion roars and ſcatter'd parties fly,
Confuſion, tumult, hurry and diſmay,
O'erſpread each guilty face.———
What mean the rumours that aſſail my ear?—
Throw down their arms—as cowards fly the field!—
Could the brave Cortes thus forſake their lord?—
My throbbing heart augurs a thouſand ills,
That ſhake my frame and terrify my ſoul,
As if I ſaw their new flown ghoſts advance,
Juſt reeking from the carnage of the field;
Yet feel within a manly force of mind
Urging to deeds heroic and ſublime,
Which but to name, one half my timid ſex,
Would fall the victims of their own deſpair.
I ſcorn the feeble ſoul that cannot brave,
With magnanimity, the ſtorms of life.
Then why diſturb'd with theſe ill omen'd fears?—
Yet what am I, if my Padilla falls?—
Ah! if the daſtard citizens have fled—
Juſt anger'd heaven ſurely has decreed
That on the point of Charles's conquering ſword,
Each veſtige of their ancient rights ſhould die.
I'll wander down to yonder darkſome grove,
(And proſtrate fall before th' etherial king,
Who holds his empire o'er a jarring world,
Makes peace and freedom ſmile at his command,
Or the fell tyrant's ſuffer'd to ſucceed,

To

To chain the will, or manacle the mind ;)
There will I calm my agitated breaſt,
Dry off thoſe tears which, ſtarting, have betray'd
The ſoften'd weakneſs of a female mind.

Enter SOCIA.

SOCIA.

Fly, deareſt lady—ſave thyſelf and ſon—
And let the faithful Socia guard thy ſteps.

MARIA.

Is all then loſt—and is Don Juan ſlain ?—
Tell the whole tale, and ſet my ſoul on fire,
Ere yet it freeze with agony and doubt.

SOCIA.

Haſte, my dear miſtreſs—fly theſe cruel ſcenes
Of murder, rapine, perfidy and blood.
The routed troops, with haſty frighted ſteps,
All backward tread, nor could Don Juan's zeal,
His valour, virtue, fortitude or fame,
Subdue their fears and rally them again,
Nor damp the ardour of the hot purſuit.

MARIA.

And does he live to glut their barb'rous rage ?
Or did ſome ſeraph catch the hero's breath,
His lateſt ſigh to ſee his country free,
And gently waft his kindred ſoul away ?

SOCIA.

Our foes may boaſt that victory was theirs ;
But royal ranks lie weltering on the plain
Where Juan's blood has mark'd the glorious ſpot.
Yet loſe no time, for hither haſtes a guard
To ſeize and drag to Conde Haro's tent
The wife and infant of my much lov'd lord.

MARIA.

MARIA.

Alas! my child—my ſon—my darling boy!
The faireſt virtues beam in his young eye;
Each dawning grace ſits blooming on his cheek,
And ſpeaks him heir of all his father's fame.
Shall he, an orphan on the world be toſs'd,
And loſe his name among a group of ſlaves?
Forbid it, heaven!—a mother's fears
Shall not diſarm my heart.———

SOCIA.

I thought the ſtrength of thy ſuperiour mind
Could nobly brave the worſt that fate could do.

MARIA.

It ſhall—come, lead me on—
To my Padilla's tomb———
His clay cold corpſe I'll bathe in ſtreams of blood,
Drawn from his foes, and ſprinkled o'er his grave.
The cypreſs gloom, in dark fix'd ſhades ſhall bow,
And weeping willows drop a ſilent tear,
'Till rolling years ſee the laſt ſands run out,
When wither'd Time throws down his uſeleſs glaſs,
And ſhrouds beneath eternity's big orb.

SOCIA.

If thou would'ſt be more wretched than thy lord,
Then weep and linger—thoughtleſs of thy ſon.

MARIA.

Go, bring him hither—rob'd in funeral pomp—
Attended by my retinue and guards;
I will not fly—Toledo yet is ſtrong:
Maria ne'er will drag a wretched life,
To wail Don Juan's fate in vulgar grief:
Nor yet in ſlavery meet a lingering death,
Beneath a tyrant's foot.

I will

I will avenge my lord———
Though the rough ſurges in loud tempeſts roar,
'Till the rude billows meet the lowering clouds—
I never will deſpair, till my ſoul flies
And mixes with the bold exalted ſhades,
The ſtern brow'd ſpirits of the feudal lords—
Who now bend down, and frowning from the ſkies,
Chide back their daſtard ſons to take the field,
Bravely to fight—to conquer or to die.

SOCIA.

My heart miſgives—I fear thy raſh reſolve,
Yet I obey.——— [*Exit* SOCIA.

MARIA.

Ye powers who ſit in judgment o'er the world,
Or ye malignant fiends who blaſt our hopes,
Grant Charles's reſtleſs ſoul may be condemn'd
With Siſyphus to roll in endleſs pain,
Up the Tartarean hill—the load of empire—
That envy'd bauble which mankind adore;
Then drag him down, ſucceſsleſsly to weep,
This ſhadow hunted long in human blood.

[*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

DON JUAN *and* DON FRANCIS *in Chains, led by the Guards acroſs the Stage.—Paſs off.*

DON VELASCO *and* CONDE HARO.

DE HARO.

TO ſee my country bleed, diſtracts my ſoul;
But ſuffering virtue moves the gods themſelves.
I muſt implore my father's lenient hand
To hold ſuſpended yet the priſoner's fate,
Until the emperor himſelf arrives :—
His clemency may fix his royal power,
And make him worthy of the crown he wears.
A pardon granted to the good and brave
Will bind their faith by gratitude and grace.

VELASCO.

The laws have fix'd their ſignet on their fate;
Nor will I pauſe, or heſitate between,
The wide extremes of pity and revenge.
Did conſcience melt, and bid me ſpare their lives,
I'd ſpurn her back—bid the rude phantom fly,
And ceaſe to check me in my fix'd deſign;
They die tomorrow ere the ſun retires.

DE HARO.

I plight my ſword, my honour, faith and life,
Thoſe ſacred ſanctions that bind men of worth,
That Francis' pardon, or Don Juan's life,

Shall not impede the glory of the king,
Nor cauſe new ruptures, or diſturb the realm.

VELASCO.

The block's prepar'd—by juſtice' hand they die.

DE HARO.

Let pity touch thy breaſt—let innocence—
Let infant tears—let virgin ſorrow plead—
And let the matron's grief torn boſom urge
A huſband's cauſe :—O ſpare Padilla's life !—

VELASCO.

And does my ſon—the glory of his houſe,
Stand half diſſolv'd by pity's ſoftening tear ?

DE HARO.

There is a ſecret cauſe I dare not name,
That yet might ſoften a fond father's heart.

VELASCO.

This curſed cauſe—alas ! too long conceal'd,
Unbends thy purpoſe, and unmans thy arm.
Louiſa knows her ſecret guilt's betray'd ;
Her trembling ſteps too weak to bear her there,
I yeſterday confin'd her to her room ;
Bade her paepare to pay her nuptial vows
To one I'd choſen for her rightful lord,
To ſave her honour from a wanton love.

DE HARO.

Do not precipitate the lovely maid,
But gently lead with a paternal hand ;
And let time heal her agitated breaſt.

VELASCO.

Stay not to prattle here for pardoning grace.
Though weeping maids, or aged ſires combin'd,
Or liſping infants join the matron's tears

To

To plead their cauſe, my reſolution's fix'd :
Theſe outcaſts of the world ſhall be cut off,
As nature's ſhreds, and blotted out of time.

DE HARO.

Then I repair to viſit and conſole
Afflicted worth in its extreme diſtreſs.

VELASCO.

Go, take thy leave—ſalute thy treacherous friends,
Ere my right hand ſhall ſend them to the ſhades.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

DON JUAN DE PADILLA, *ſolus.—In Priſon.*

DON JUAN.

TRUE dignity may acquieſe in ills,
None can foreſee, nor value can repel ;
Meekneſs becomes the Chriſtian and the man,
Nor leſs the hero, when his God decrees
The palm of victory to a ſtronger hand.
Here mimic juſtice rears his ſcaffold high—
I feel the knife already at my throat ;
Death is the certain doom of all mankind—
To learn to die is an heroic work :—
But thus to die an ignominious death—
Without a trial, or the forms of law,
Pronounc'd a traitor—hurry'd from the ſtage—
Torn from exiſtence as an uſeleſs worm,
By a baſe, vile, aſſaſſinating hand,
Fires all my ſoul with fury and revenge.

Had

Had I have met my fate at Villabar,
And as a ſoldier fell, and mix'd my blood
With the rich ſtream that yeſterday pour'd off,
(While freedom's genius ſtoop'd and drop'd a tear,
And held a golden urn in her right hand,
To catch the fluid from each gaping wound,
And rear'd her altar on the field of fame;)
I'd died content, and ſpurn'd this nether world,
And glori'd in the deathleſs name I left:—
But, though tomorrow ſevers me from time,
My ſoul is firm:—I view this little globe
Hung on a ſingle, half extinguiſh'd point:—
That's not the ſting which barbs the hand of death,
But my Maria—my lov'd, my virtuous wife:—
Oh! could oblivion wrap her from my thoughts
Until we meet where ſouls are free indeed.

Enter CONDE HARO.

Hah! who bends this way?—the Conde Haro—
Rank cowardice in guilt's gigantic garb!—
Has victory eras'd the noble flame
Of ſympathy in thine heroic breaſt,
That thou can'ſt wiſh, mid'ſt glory and applauſe,
To taſte the triumph of infernal minds,
And thus inſult e'en in the pangs of death?—

DE HARO.

Far other thoughts pervade my friendly breaſt.
Though in the field, the king commands my ſword,
My heart I give to virtue in diſtreſs.
Though warmly urg'd thy pardon or reprieve,
Velaſco's will, inexorably ſtern,
Has fix'd the moment that completes thy date.
What can I more—to ſooth thy wounded mind?
Say—doſt thou wiſh to ſee thy lov'd Maria?—

Or pour a bleſſing on the infant head
Of thy young ſon, and bid a laſt adieu?—
But if this tender ſcene's too big with grief,
Then write whate'er conjugal love inſpires,
Or the paternal heart would wiſh to ſay:—
De Haro's honour is the pledge of truth;
I'll ſacredly tranſmit the precious charge,
Nor ſhall a mortal eye profane the ſeals.

DON JUAN.

Too generous De Haro!—my full heart,
In tears of blood, ſhall mark my gratitude;
And my laſt breath its benediction pour
On worth—on glory—dignify'd as thine,
With all that's noble in a human ſoul.
But ah!—too flattering to ſuch a wretch—
To ſee Maria once, is fancy'd bliſs
The Deity has plac'd beyond my reach.

DE HARO.

A faithful friend ſhall lead thee ſafely on,
My ſword—my veſt—my helmet, thy defence;
If any curious prying eye purſues,
Or aſks thy errand, or demands thy name,
Pauſe not, nor ſpeak, but ſhew De Haro's ſeal.
But on the moment that the midnight bell
Strikes its laſt note, and grates thy wounded ear,
With the ſevereſt pang thou yet haſt felt,
Thou muſt return—and when we meet again,
Then ſay my friend———
If one baſe thought has e'er deform'd my ſoul.

[*Hurries off* DON JUAN *in his own habit.*

[Exeunt.

SCENE III.

DON VELASCO *and* DONNA LOUISA.

VELASCO.

PRESUMPTUOUS maid—how durſt thou diſobey,
And ruſh abroad, amid tumultuous ſcenes,
And riſque the wrath of an offended ſire?

LOUISA.

Excuſe, my lord, this haſty, bold intruſion;
The boon I aſk admits of no delay.

LOUISA.

What means this daring importuning girl?
What brought thee to the threſhold of a jail?
Thy trembling geſtures and thy frighted mein,
Are ſad preſages that relieve thy tongue
Ere it betrays ſome bold accurs'd requeſt.

LOUISA.

All gracious ſire, whoſe goodneſs I adore,
Thus on my bended knee, my bleeding heart,
Swell'd with its gratitude, as if 'twould burſt,
Intreats thee once to hear Don Francis ſpeak,
Ere thy lip dooms to death the braveſt man.

VELASCO.

What int'reſt haſt thou in a rebel life,
That thus in tears—in agonies of grief—
In weeds of woe, thou pleadeſt for Don Francis?

LOUISA.

The firſt impreſſion of my early youth,
Thine own injunction, and my infant heart,

Taught

Taught me to love—whate'er Maria lov'd—
Her brother.————

VELASCO.

————dies, as her husband shall;
Nor will thy tears retard the blow
Due to a traitor's crimes.————

LOUISA.

Oh! grant an audience ere his fate is seal'd.

VELASCO.

Think not I am deceiv'd, audacious maid!
'Tis not a childish fondness for Maria
Wakes up a zeal that misbecomes thy sex—
'Tis baser passions foster'd in thy soul;
Don Francis is the object of thy love:—
Thy quick blood flows, and loose desires now play
About thy heart, and wanton in thy eye;
Yet sense of shame, still burns thy redden'd cheek,
And cinders the smooth blush of innocence;
But I've the means to cool thy hot brain'd flame,
And from disgrace my family retrieve.

LOUISA.

Oh! spare Louisa—save thy hapless child!

VELASCO.

Think not to melt my rigid purpose down;
Forbear to practise hackney'd female arts,
Thy sex's tears have ruin'd half mankind.
My heart near bursts whene'er I bend my eye
On such a worthless fragment of my house:
But for Zelinda's image on thy brow
I'd spurn at once from my indignant soul
The lying semblance of so fair a form.

LOUISA.

LOUISA.

By the dear mem'ry of that ſainted name
Forgive her daughter's agony of ſoul.
Zelinda, oh!—compaſſionate my woes—
Look down, bleſs'd ſaint, from thy divine abode,
And teach my ſire to pity thy Louiſa.

VELASCO.

While guilt hangs on thy baſe degen'rate lip,
Durſt thou appeal to purity itſelf?—

LOUISA.

This keen reproach diſtracts my tortur'd ſoul—
A thought unworthy of Zelinda's ſelf,
Ne'er found a place in this my ſpotleſs heart.

Enter DON PEDRO.

VELASCO.

Then will I now beſtow thee caſte and pure,
And bleſs the noble Pedro with thy hand;
Thou art his bride—bound by my ſolemn oath,
A juſt reward for loyalty and faith.

LOUISA.

Now all ye powers of earth and heaven, ſave
From this laſt ſtroke—this worſt of human ills!—

PEDRO.

I am too bleſs'd, by ſuch an heavenly gift.

LOUISA.

Revoke thy ſentence—ſnatch me from perdition—
Or let me die with him my heart adores.

[*Sinks on her knee before her father, and faints.*

VELASCO.

I've gone too far—yet there's ſome curs'd deſign,
Some myſtery conceal'd—that neither ſhe,
Nor yet De Haro's bold and dauntleſs tongue,

Dare

Dare ope before an injur'd father's eye.
Poor lifeleſs maid—ſure ſhe's not dead;—
[*Lays his hand on her forehead.*
She almoſt wakes compaſſion in my breaſt:
But let my ear be deaf—my heart be ſear'd
To every ſoft ſenſation of the ſoul,
'Till infamy is wip'd from off my houſe.

PEDRO.

Spare her awhile, and let the ſtorm ſubſide;
The mind that's ſoften'd thus by love and grief,
Muſt, like the babe of innocence, be lull'd
And gently ſooth'd, and fondled into peace.
[*Raiſes, and holds* LOUISA *in his arms.*
See, ſhe revives—ſpeak ſoft and kindly
To the charming maid.———

LOUISA.

The tardy hand of death ſtill lengthens out
A life of woe——Hah! where am I—
[*Opens her eyes and finds herſelf in* PEDRO'S *arms—ſhrieks, and ſtarts from him.*
On earth—the grave—in hades—or in hell?—
Art thou the fiend chain'd to my frighted ſoul,
To add new tortures to the ſhades below?—

VELASCO.

Be calm, thou frantic girl— [*Stops, and holds her.*
Nor thus enrag'd fly from thy huſband's arms.

LOUISA.

Was I the price, for which at Villabar,
That perjur'd wight, betray'd and ſold his friends?
Go, minion! traitor! hide thy guilty head,
Thy country bluſhes that ſhe gave thee birth.

VELASCO.

VELASCO.

Reſpect becomes thy lip—he is thy lord.——

LOUISA.

As much as does my ſoul abhor his name,
If poſſible, I more deſpiſe than hate,
The infamous—the cowardly Don Pedro.

VELASCO.

Pedro, retire—I'll bend her to thy will—
She ſhall be thine—thou art my ſon—
By all the ſaints and angels I adore,
This eve ſhall ſolemnize the nuptial rights;
Ere Francis dies—let conſummation crown
Don Pedro's wiſh, and wake full vengeance up.

[*Exit* PEDRO.

LOUISA.

Alas! my ſire—Oh! let religion plead:—
Forgive thy child, and bleſs me ere I die.
Pardon the purpoſe of my daring ſoul:
But ere I yield, I'll bare my filial breaſt,
Meet the drawn dagger's point, and kiſs the poignard
In my father's hand—uplift in wrath,
Its edge to bury in this ſpotleſs breaſt—
A breaſt replete with duty and reſpect—
With every ſentiment that heaven requires,
Or to paternal or conjugal love—
From thy fond daughter, or Don Francis' wife.

VELASCO.

Don Francis' wife!—Heaven blaſt my ears!—

LOUISA.

His wife—his wedded wife—
Nor let the grave, the ſacred tie diſſolve:
By the ſame ſanction let us periſh both,
Or both be bleſs'd, and by thy pardon live.

VELASCO.

VELASCO.

Could my Louiſa proſtitute her fame;
In a mad fit of wanton love, entail
Diſgrace eternal, on the illuſtrious name
Of Don Velaſco!—abandon'd girl!—
Then take my ſword, and uſe it as ye liſt;
Thy paramour this moment meets the death
Thy perfidy extorts and his deſerves. [*Exit* VELASCO.

SCENE IV.

Street before DON JUAN'S *Houſe.*

DON JUAN DE PADILLA *and* DON FRANCIS.

DON JUAN.

FRIEND of my early youth—my brave Don Francis—
Unlike the world—a friend in fortune's wane;
Thou haſt a ſoul that dares to mix with grief,
And kindly ſeek'ſt thy wretched ſiſter out
To ſooth the anguiſh of extreme diſtreſs.
But how did'ſt thou eſcape thy gloomy cell?—
Or by what means elude the watchful guard?—

FRANCIS.

In ſables clad, my face bedew'd with tears,
The guards ſuppos'd I was thy noble ſire,
Who had permiſſion to embrace his ſon,
Ere death had ſeal'd an heirleſs father's woe.
But on parole, I have De Haro's leave
To fly to Charles, and in Velaſco's name,

To

To ſue for pardon from the emperor's hand,
And claim my bride by his Zelinda's ring :—
He gave me both his ſignet and command,
And bade me on the moment haſte away ;
The next he ſaid perhaps betray'd to death.
I caught the letters with a rapturous hand,
And kiſs'd the ſeals, and dropt a grateful tear ;
I've waited but to bid my friend adieu,
But not to ſee thy wife till I return.

DON JUAN.

Ah !—if thou can'ſt retrieve ſo brave a life,
Protect Maria, and her infant ſon ;
Let them not languiſh in a ſervile land,
To watch the nod of ſome imperious lord.
Then tell the gazing citizens, who o'er
My breathleſs corpſe, before the morrow cloſe,
Will weep, and ſigh, and curſe my hapleſs fate,
That they have cheriſh'd many valiant ſons,
Who amply may avenge my early death,
And teach the world that fortune ne'er ſtands ſtill :—
In the routine of her uncertain wheel,
She ſoon may jilt her fondled, favour'd ſons.
The ſycophant and prince may both be taught,
A ſceptre's but the plaything of a day.
Then let my father, noble Lopez, know
Don Juan died, as Lopez' ſon ſhould die,
A dauntleſs martyr in his country's cauſe.

FRANCIS.

Thy orders ſhall be punctually obey'd.
I with my blood will ſeal the ſacred charge ;
Though I could willing leave ſo baſe a world,
And ſhare with thee, the glory of thy death ;
Yet, for Louiſa's ſake, I wiſh to live.

DON

DON JUAN.

Thou muſt away—'tis death to linger here—
'Tis raſhneſs in extreme—thou can't eſcape
The prying eyes that lurk for human blood :—
Thy mein and aſpect cannot be conceal'd—
Thy ſoul ſhines through, and virtue's here a crime.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

DON JUAN's *Houſe*—DONNA MARIA *looking penſively into a Garden from her Apartment—Thunder and Lightning.*

MARIA.

THOSE ſolemn groves—thoſe ſpacious ſhaded walks,
Whoſe lofty tops ſalute the ſkirted clouds,
And ſpeak the grandeur of their ancient lords,
Bend down their heads, reſponſive, to the ſkies,
Which murmur thunders o'er Heſperia's fall.
Sure nature joins to bend my ſpirits down,
And rive the bolts through my diſtracted ſoul,
That diſtant thunders ſhake the trembling dome,
And ſtorms irruptive tear the ſhatter'd ſkies.

Enter JUAN *in the Amour and Habit of a royal Officer.*—MARIA *ſtarting, accoſts him.*

Hah !—dar'ſt thou come alone, thou miſcreant ſlave !
Think'ſt thou that mine is ſuch a daſtard ſoul
To yield at ſight of one of Charles's band ?—
My ſingle arm ſhall be a match for thine.

DON JUAN.

This interview—this moment is my own———

[*Approaching.*

MARIA.

Off, ruffian, off!—or by the powers above,
The next ſhall fix a dagger in thy heart.

[*Draws a poignard from under her robe.*

DON JUAN.

On this laſt night that thy Padilla lives,
Oh! let me claſp thee to my faithful breaſt.

[*Throws off his diſguiſe.*

MARIA.

Immortal powers!—Say, do my eyes behold
The injur'd ghoſt of my deceaſed lord?
Or does my huſband—my Don Juan live?—

DON JUAN.

He lives indeed—this one ſhort hour he lives.
When through the ſharpeſt ſtorms of life he ſees
Thee firmly ſtand—by fortitude ſecur'd,
'Tis worth a world to fold thee to my heart.

MARIA.

Did not my lord—my lov'd Padilla fall,
Amidſt the carnage of the noon tide rout?—

DON JUAN.

The faithful Socia reported thus,
Leſt thou ſhould'ſt periſh in ſome raſh attempt
To ſee thy Juan, and neglect thy ſon.
But a ſeverer doom awaits my fate;
I, on the morrow, as a traitor die.

MARIA.

Jehovah ſtoop, and lend thy potent arm,
To ſnatch the virtuous from ſo vile a fate;

Or

Or let theſe curling fires, which, from the North,
Emblazon nature's face from pole to pole,
In mantling flames, in one devouring wreck,
Sweep down the ſtars and cruſh this nether world.

DON JUAN.

The Deity enwraps his dark decrees
Beyond the ken of man's preſumptuous eye :—
Yet ſouls ſublime, ſerenely look abroad,
And bid the howling tempeſts rage in vain.
Though livid lightnings blaze from north to ſouth,
The tempeſts of this laſt tremendous night
Are as the breeze that wafts the gentle bark
Down the ſtill tide, when every gale is huſh'd—
If my Maria's mind ſupports its poiſe,
And ſmiles, ſu[illegible]iour to the ſhocks of fate,
They cannot reach the ſoul that ſpurns the world—
Its tinſel'd toys—its titles, and its wealth.
The tribute of a life, I hold but ſmall,
Could it repurchaſe liberty to Spain :—
Yet he is free—and he alone is free—
Who conquers paſſion, and ſubjects his will,
When his misfortunes thicken in the ſkies.

MARIA.

No more, my lord—the teſt is too ſevere—
I feel my boaſted fortitude will fail.

DON JUAN.

Oh ! ſpare my heart———
The plaintive accents of thy voice reſtrain,
Nor ſharpen, by thy tears, the pangs of death.
My heart I leave—nought elſe can I beſtow,
And once ye thought the world could give no more.

MARIA.

MARIA.

Ah!—every tender pang that woe can paint,
Or for my country—or my much lov'd lord,
Diſtracts and wounds my agitated breaſt.

DON JUAN.

Forbear to pain my tortur'd ſoul afreſh;
Exert thyſelf—magnanimouſly ſtand,
And ſave thy ſon—the city, and thyſelf.
Protect and guard the lovely ſmiling boy,
The only pledge of our unſpotted loves,
'Till he, enraptur'd, hangs upon thy lip;
While his bright eyeballs ſwim in filial tears,
To hear the accents of his dying ſire,
Tenfold enhanc'd by thy deſcriptive tongue.

MARIA.

Maternal ſoftneſs weakens my reſolve,
And wakes new fears—thou deareſt, beſt of men,
Torn from thy ſide, I'm levell'd with my ſex.
The wife—the mother—make me leſs than woman.

[MARIA *opens an adjacent apartment, and ſhews the infant in the arms of his nurſe.*

DON JUAN.

Let angel innocence lie ſoft and ſtill,
Nor call the dew drops to the infant eye
By ſympathetic, fond, parental tears.
Tell him, the laſt bequeſt his father gave,
The only legacy that heaven has lent,
Was this ſtrict charge, breath'd in his lateſt ſigh,
Be good, and juſt, as thou art nobly born,
Nor yield thy liberty but with thy life.

[JUAN *wipes off a tear, and attempts to withdraw in ſilence.*

MARIA.

MARIA.

Oh! leave me not, thus wretched and forlorn!—

DON JUAN.

How like a thief has time ſtol'n on my wiſh!—

[*Clock ſtrikes one.*

Muſt I away—hah!—this is death—
The bitterneſs of death.———

MARIA.

Wilt thou return, and on the ſcaffold bare
Thy yielding neck, and as a traitor die?

DON JUAN.

Though tottering on the margin of the grave,
For Charles's fortune balanc'd in the ſcale;
Or all the gold in Montezuma's realm,
I'd not exchange for probity of ſoul,
Unſulli'd honour, and unblaſted fame.

MARIA.

Is ſentence paſt—irrevocably paſt—
Then try the courage of a female heart,
And let me die with thee—the treaſons I avow—
The crime is mine:—I can as bravely die,
As e'er a Grecian, or a Roman dame—
And ſmile at Portia's celebrated feat,
Who drew her blood to worm a ſecret out:—
I'll kiſs the glittering ax and hug the ſhroud
That wraps me ever from a ſervile world.

DON JUAN.

Retard me not—but bid me haſte away.
Thy virtue's rais'd ſo far above thy ſex,
Come plight thy vow, thy ſacred, faithful vow,
That fortune's rougheſt blaſts, blight not thy fame.
This moment, by appointment, is my friend's,
It is the laſt that time has lent to love;—
My honour calls—her voice I muſt obey. [*Going.*

MARIA.

Oh ſtay!—Oh ſtay!—'twas not the midnight toll—
One hour more let envious time beſtow.

DON JUAN.

My throbbing heart from guile was ever free:
No breach of faith ſhall mark me for a knave.
Thou doſt not wiſh—not ev'n to purchaſe life,
To ſtain my honour by a fraudful deed:—
No—when I'm ſhrouded in my peaceful tomb,
No impious, ſervile tongue ſhall e'er reproach
My name—my memory—my life, or fame.
Adieu! my love—Adieu! to life and time—
One laſt embrace, and I am gone—forever.

[*Embraces, and retires haſtily.*

MARIA.

Oh! harſh and cruel ſound—adieu!—forever—
He's gone———
And heav'n's broad eye beholds the fatal ſtroke,
And thunders vengeance from the louring ſkies.
———[*A ſolemn pauſe.*
When his great ſoul aſcends the broad expanſe,
Let angels guard him through the widen'd dome.
But ſhall Maria ſhroud herſelf in grief,
And ſink beneath life's diſappointed hopes,
A feeble victim to her own deſpair?—
A ſoul, inſpir'd by freedom's genial warmth,
Expands—grows firm—and by reſiſtance, ſtrong:
The moſt ſucceſsful prince that offers life,
And bids me live upon ignoble terms,
Shall learn from me that virtue ſeldom fears.—
Death kindly opes a thouſand friendly gates,
And freedom waits to guard her votaries through.

[*Exit.*

ACT

ACT V.

SCENE I.

MARIA, with her young Son clad in mourning—a Standard borne before him, on which is repreſented his Father's Death—accompanied by ZAMORA and a Proceſſion of Friends—ſhe addreſſes the Citizens, Soldiers, &c. &c. &c.

BEHOLD, ye virtuous citizens of Spain,
The remnant of Don Juan's noble houſe;
See here the ſon of your late murder'd lord;
Behold his infant innocence that weeps
A father's fall, ere yet he'd learn'd to liſp
That ſacred name, which cruelty diſſolv'd.
If heaven and earth decree the world to Charles—
If Spain's prepar'd to wear the badge of ſlaves,
And degradation marks the bleeding realm—
Then, in the front of this reſpected band,
Grant me one boon—that yet ſome gen'rous arm,
Unſtain'd by vice, or dip'd in guiltleſs blood,
Would ſmite the breaſt of this his infant ſon,
And lay him gently in his father's tomb,
As the laſt heir of Spain's expiring worth
That freedom's genius offers to the gods:—
She ſtoop'd, and dip'd her target in the gore
That copious ruſh'd from noble Juan's wounds.
'Tis the cement, ſhe cry'd, in ſtronger league
To bind the liberal and unite the brave.
'Tis in thine option, wiſely did ye judge,
To flouriſh long beneath her lenient reign;
But if, ungratefully, ye ſpurn the gift,

And

And fly the field, and yield the proffer'd prize—
Bend thy weak necks, and ſervilely ſubmit,
Affronted virtue leaves ſuch daſtard ſlaves
To faint and tremble at a deſpot's nod.
I, for myſelf, a bolder part deſign;
And here, before the ſoldiers and the Cortes,
In preſence of the eternal King, I ſwear,
Moſt ſolemnly I bind my free born ſoul,
Ere I will live a ſlave, and kiſs the hand
That o'er my country clanks a ſervile chain,
I'll light the towers, and periſh in the flames,
And ſmile and triumph in the general wreck.
Come, ſhew one ſample of heroic worth,
Ere ancient Spain, the glory of the weſt,
Bends abject down—by all the nations ſcorn'd:—
Secure the city—barricade the gates,
And meet me arm'd with all the faithful bands:
I'll head the troops, and mount the prancing ſteed;
The courſer guide, and vengeance pour along
Amidſt the ranks, and teach the ſlaves of Charles
Not Semiramis' or Zenobia's fame
Outſtrips the glory of Maria's name.

[Exit.

[*The people ſhout, and fly to arms.*

SCENE

SCENE II.

A Battle without—the City taken by CONDE HARO—DONNA MARIA *fled to the Citadel—the little Son of* DON JUAN *aſleep on a Sofa—*MARIA *weeping over him.*

MARIA.

THOUGH all is loſt, and ſubjugated Spain
Lies bleeding at the footſtool of a king,
I yet would live, for this young cherub's ſake :—
Yet what inſures his mind unſtain'd and pure ?
Nurtur'd in venal, ſycophantic ſchools—
Eras'd each ſterling virtue of the ſoul—
Debas'd—new coin'd in flattery's ſervile mint,
He may become a pander to a prince.
Ah !—thus to ſee Don Juan's ſon enſlav'd,
Shocks more than death in its moſt frightful form.
O guard him, angels—guard him, powers ſupreme,
From the contagion of each vulgar vice,
Or the more ſplendid guilt that ſtalks in courts !—

Enter CONDE HARO.

Why this freſh inſolence, thou barbarous man !
Thus to obtrude and doubly wound my ſoul,
And blaſt my eyes by ſuch a hated ſight,
The blood ſtain'd murd'rer of my injur'd lord.

DE HARO.

O hear me once, and then pronounce my doom.

MARIA.

Thy every word accumulates thy guilt,
And barbs the pointed dagger in my breaſt.

DE HARO.

Fain would I ſooth and mitigate thy grief.

[*Advancing.*

MARIA.

O death relieve, and ſhroud from mortal eye—
Give my indignant ſoul a larger field—
It burns—it beats—it burſts—oh! give it way,
Ere it in atoms tears thy trembling frame—
This ſhatter'd caſement opes—[*Lays her hand on her breaſt.*
Traitor, ſtand off——
Or, like a furious ſpectre, bath'd in blood,
Arm'd with the fangs of horror and deſpair,
It haſtens on, and drags thee down to hell.

[*Runs wildly acroſs the ſtage.*

DE HARO.

Though nature works this ſtorm of paſſion up,
Reaſon muſt calm, and juſtice hear my plea.

[*Follows, and detains her.*

MARIA.

By force detain'd a priſoner—a ſlave—
Oh! heavens and earth, and gods and men relieve—
Revenge this outrage on my feeble ſex!

DE HARO.

Not diſreſpect—'tis veneration holds;—
The Conde Haro's not the guilty thing,
Thy ſufferings, fate, and fortune repreſent.
I fought Don Juan as my duty urg'd,
Yet my heart bled when brave Padilla fell;—
Now once permit—I'll lay a boſom ope,
And bare a breaſt that heaven itſelf may read.
The pureſt paſſion had ſubdu'd my heart,
Before ill fortune made me Juan's foe;
O! heav'n forgive—I lov'd his virtuous wife,

And

And ſecret bore the heart corroding pangs.
I lov'd in ſilence—ſmother'd all my flame—
While honour—juſtice—every ſacred tie,
Had made its utterance the blackeſt crime.

MARIA.

And doſt thou think to mitigate thy guilt,
Thus to torment the brave Don Juan's wife?—
To add to wretchedneſs—to fill up woe—
Force her to hear thy black adulterous tongue?—
Alas! the diſmal croak—the voice of love
From hell's dark gloom, would leſs diſmay than thine.

DE HARO.

I wept the pangs that thy great ſoul muſt feel
When thy Padilla was my priſoner made.
Juſt heaven can witneſs what my ſoul endur'd
When martial law announc'd his forfeit, life—
A debt his ſovereign and the ſtate might claim.
My ear reluctant, heard the ſentence paſs'd,
And inſtant death decreed to worth like his.

MARIA.

Forbear thy falſe diſſimulating ſtrains;
Thy tongue pronounc'd the vile inglorious doom,
That wrap'd in death the hero and the ſaint?
And now complet'ſt the meaſure of thy guilt,
Thus by compulſion, to detain his wife,
To hear a moment thy deteſted love.

DE HARO.

What furious paſſions play in that fair breaſt!—

MARIA.

Old time ſhall tell, and every age record,
Don Juan's worth, contraſted with thy guilt,
When curious eyes ſhall ſeek the mouldering tomb;
Where freedom waſtes in tears beſide the turf,

And

And points the ſtranger to the ſacred ſpot,
Where death enrols her laſt diſtinguiſh'd ſon,
Urg'd to his fate by probity and zeal,
To ſave his country from a ſervile yoke.

DE HARO.

I, the firſt witneſs of his merit ſtand—
A generous wiſh to ſave and bleſs mankind,
Urg'd him to glory in a devious path;
No man can tread, but on perdition's brink,
While ſtanding armies ſwell the monarch's train,
And kingdoms bend, and empires own the claim,
Of mighty Charles, to keep the world in awe.

MARIA.

Away, thou coward!—cringing, daſtard ſlave!
Go fawn on kings, and boaſt thy proweſs there;
Tell that the brave, who ne'er could meanly bend,
By cowardice were hurry'd to the block:
'Twas coward fear that haſten'd Juan's death:
As fortune play'd him once a loſing game,
Thou durſt not let him live another day.
Leſt his good genius might have lent the means
To extricate his country and himſelf,
Thou'ſt added murder to thy liſt of crimes.

DE HARO.

Reproach like this from any tongue but thine,
Should on itſelf recoil, and blaſt the lip
That wounds my honour—ne'er before impeach'd.

MARIA.

Reſent it as thou ought—I'm not afraid
Of Conde Haro's ſword—ſtrike here, aſſaſſin!
[*Lays her hand on her breaſt.*
And complete thy work—dar'ſt thou not ſtrike,
Who haſt beheld Don Juan on a ſcaffold,

Breathleſs

Breathleſs and pale, and as a felon die?—
Give me a ſword, I'll meaſure it with thine,
For by the powers above, to thee I ſwear,
Maria lives but to avenge his death.

DE HARO.

What lioneſs has nurs'd thy tender years?
Or can'ſt thou feel for every pain but mine?

MARIA.

Then let me haſte, and fly thy ſight forever.

DE HARO.

Pardon me, madam, while I urge my ſuit;
I have ſome merit—ſo thy Juan thought—
When grateful tears ran down his manly cheek.
I have one plea that may reſtore my fame.
A ſhort adieu permitted by Velaſco,
I left my tent, and haſten'd to Don Juan,
To ſooth the ſorrows of his noble ſoul,
And make the tenders of a generous friend.
'Twas his laſt wiſh—the lateſt boon of life,
To ſee thee once, before the fatal ſtroke,
Sever'd forever from the world's beſt gift:—
I, in a ſoldier's habit, ſent him on,
As with a meſſage from De Haro's hand,
Myſelf a priſoner till he ſhould return;
As well I knew, not wealth, or crowns, or life,
Nor thy ſuperiour charms, would tempt abuſe
Of confidence thus plac'd in honour's breaſt.

MARIA.

Immortal powers!—am I a debtor made
For the laſt bliſsful moment of my life,
To him my ſoul, of all mankind, abhors?

DE HARO.

The debt was cancell'd when he call'd me, *friend*,

And bade me, with a tender, gentle hand,
Wipe off Maria's tears, and ſave her ſon,
And guard them both from peril and diſgrace:
Not honour's ſelf, or gratitude, or love,
Can plead a claim his merit don't eraſe.
The godlike pleaſure of conferring good
On hearts ſo worthy, leaves me in arrears:—
I ſtand indebted to thy noble lord.

MARIA.

To what extremes is human nature wrought!—
Can dignity and real greatneſs dwell,
Thus mix'd and blended, in a ſervile ſoul?—
Or haſt thou ſeen thy error, and renounc'd
The bloody ſtandard of the tyrant Charles?—
To make atonement to the injur'd dead,
Come, wield thy ſword in a more glorious cauſe,
And lend thine arm to make thy country free.

DE HARO.

Tempt not my loyalty, nor wound my fame.——

MARIA.

If there is aught of truth or love in thee—
Haſt thou a wiſh to ſee Maria more—
Theſe are the terms from which ſhe'll ne'er recede.
But ſee thy vengeful fire bends this way;—
Where ſhall I find an aſylum for woe?

DE HARO.

Live as a queen in Don Emanuel's court.
A truſty friend eſcorts thy ſon and thee
To Portugal's more hoſpitable ſhore,
Beyond the reach of Don Velaſco's rage,
'Till time reſtore thy peace, and make thee mine.

[MARIA *and her ſon hurried off the ſtage by* DE HARO's *friends and guards.*

[Exit.

SCENE III.

DON VELASCO *and* CONDE HARO.

VELASCO.

WRETCH that thou art!—thou haſt debas'd the houſe,
The noble name—the blood of Don Velaſco.

DE HARO.

None but thyſelf, ſhould, with impunity,
Upbraid a man, whoſe honour ne'er was ſtain'd
By one baſe act—whoſe ſoul diſdains a thought
But what ennobles both thy ſon and thee.

VELASCO.

My ſon—no, I renounce the claim,
And raſe thy memory from thy blaſted line;
A mean ſoul, proſtrate at a woman's foot—
A traitoreſs, both to her God and king,
Was ne'er ally'd to the Velaſcan blood.

DE HARO.

If virtue ſtands at variance with worth,
Or if true greatneſs can abuſe the wretched,
Then may my father's much revered lip,
With cruel inſult, wound the faireſt fame.
Thou knoweſt not the luſtre that adorns
Maria's ſoul, and lifts her o'er her ſex—
The virtues that combine to make her great:
Her angel form commands profound reſpect;
Her beauty, grace, her conſtancy and truth—
Her noble mind and energy of thought,
Would dignify the moſt illuſtrious name.

VELASCO.

VELASCO.

Thy love tales whine in her diſdainful ear.
This idle, rapturous pageantry of words,
This play of fancy, fann'd by luſtful gales,
Theſe looſe, mad ravings of a hot brain'd youth,
Have made me ſick of life. Oh! how debas'd
Is honour—duty—gratitude and fame!——
How are thy laurels ſtain'd, and meanly laid
Beneath the pedeſtal of wanton love;
A tranſient beam, ſhot from a ſorc'reſs' eye,
Whom mercy yet has ſpar'd to rave and weep
Her huſband's fall—her diſappointed pride.
But by the eternal thunderer above,
She ſhall not triumph thus————
Mine aged arm, inur'd to war and blood,
Is not ſo worn by time, nor yet ſo weak,
But it can ſend her murmuring ſoul to hell;
Nay, harder ſtill, has ſtrength to graſp the hilt,
And plunge this vet'ran ſword in thy baſe breaſt,
To let out that falſe blood that taints thy ſoul
And poiſons all my peace. [*Draws.*

DE HARO.

What means my ſire?————

VELASCO.

To make thee worthy of thy noble name.——

DE HARO.

If death alone entitles to the claim,
I fear it not in any form but this.

[*Retires backward, and bows reſpectfully as going off.*

VELASCO.

Fly not my vengeance—daſtard—villain—ſlave!—

DE HARO.

Hah!—daſtard—villain—ſlave—Oh! heavens!

Can

Can the great God command I ſhould ſubmit
To ſuch reproach—ev'n from a father's lip?—
[*Suddenly lays his hand on his ſword.*

VELASCO.

Come, try its point againſt my wounded breaſt,
Or hoary head, grown grey in honour's path—
That bends and bows and bluſhes for his ſon.

DE HARO.

Not the rich ſands of Chili or Peru,
Nor all the wealth Potoſi has in ſtore,
Shall bribe me from my duty and reſpect,
My filial love and reverence for thee. [*Bends on his knee.*

VELASCO.

I do not wiſh to make thee more a coward.——

DE HARO.

A coward—traitor—villain and a ſlave!—
My honour ſtain'd by epithets ſo vile.——
None but thyſelf within this ample round,
Should dare unite a baſe, opprobrious term
With Conde Haro's name—but thou'rt my ſire—
Then take a life I wiſh not to preſerve.
[*Throws his ſword from him, and bares his breaſt.*

VELASCO.

Take up thy dagger—plunge it in my breaſt,
Or give thy fooliſh paſſion to the winds.

DE HARO.

No—neither.———

VELASCO.

Bring back the fugitive to juſtice' arm—
Renounce thy love.———

DE HARO.

Never.———

VELASCO.

Never!———

DE HARO.

Not if Maria hears my faithful vows—
'Tis honour, wealth and empire to my ſoul.

VELASCO.

Fly from my vengeful hand—thou'rt not my ſon—
I've been deceiv'd—alas! too long deceiv'd.
Thou art ſome low—ſome vile impoſter—palm'd
Upon my houſe—and nature feels no pang,
To ſend thy ſoul to wander with the dead.

[*Makes a furious paſs at* DE HARO, *but is ſo enraged he trembles and drops his ſword.*

DE HARO.

When nature ſhall cut off thy thread of life,
I'll meet thee there, by thy Zelinda's ſide—
That angel form that gave a ſon to thee.

VELASCO.

Hah!—my Zelinda—her ſacred name
Has wak'd the father up, and checks my rage;—
Oh! had this raſh, this guilty hand ſent down
The mangled ghoſt of her belov'd De Haro—
Her darling ſon—ſlain by a father's hand—
In Hades to accuſe his barbarous heart
For ſuch an outrage on ſo brave a ſon;—
Both wandering ſpirits and the ſaints above,
Alike would curſe his cruelty and crime;—
But as thy ſword—thy valiant conquering arm
Has quell'd rebellion, and cut off their chiefs,
Let me intreat———

[*Enter* DON FRANCIS—*a bloody ſword extended in his hand.*

———Hah! what do I ſee?—
Heav'n blaſt my eyes!—Say, can Don Francis live?—

FRANCIS.

FRANCIS.

——————Thou ſee'ſt thy duteous ſon—
The wedded huſband of thy lov'd Louiſa—
Thou ſee'ſt his ſword wet with the blood of Pedro,
Who would have robb'd me of my lovely bride;
His coward ghoſt now murmurs in the ſhades,
And groans repentance for his faithleſs deeds.

VELASCO.

Thy rebel inſolence my hand ſhall cruſh
When thou haſt told by what infernal fiend,
Or helliſh arts, thy life's protracted thus,
To plunge my houſe in infamy and guilt.

FRANCIS.

Thy generous ſon has ſav'd me from the grave;
That noble friend, when, on the verge of death,
Set ope the priſon gates, and bade me fly
To mighty Charles, and boldly ſue for grace.
Know'ſt thou thy lov'd Zelinda's bridal ring?—

[*Preſents it to* VELASCO.

This precious pledge made thy Louiſa mine,
And, often ſeen upon Velaſco's hand,
Procur'd and ſeal'd a pardon from the emperor.

VELASCO.

That guardian angel of my happier days,
Sure hovers here, and guides my ſanguine ſteps;
Protects her children from their father's rage,
And ſmooths my paſſions down the vale of life.
Go, Francis, ſee if yet Louiſa lives,
And heaven forgive my cruelty to her!—
Each paſſion dies but love to my Louiſa,
And ſtrong affection to the beſt of ſons. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE IV.

LOUISA, *ſola, on her knees, looking up to Heaven in agony, with her Father's Sword in her hand, pointed to her breaſt.*

LET this bright canopy ſpread o'er my head,
And all the wonders of the vaſt concave—
Each radiant flame that ſhoots its friendly beam
O'er nature's empire, and proclaims a god,
Lend me their aid to ſolemnize my ſoul;
To huſh the tumult of life's various cares,
That rage without, or reign within my breaſt.
'Tis heav'n bids me leave this mazy world,
To its own guilt, ambition, pride and blood.
Hah!—does my purpoſe flag——
[*Trembles, and drops the ſword.*
I feel my courage firm—yet fear my God—
Will he forgive a ſufferi.g wretch,
Weary of life—yet not afraid to die—
Who quits her poſt, ere nature makes demand—
Unbidden ruſhes to his awful throne——
A ghaſtly—grim—a diſcontented ſoul,
Bath'd in the blood of ſuicide!
My trembling frame ſhrinks at the dread idea—
Yet what—ah! what can ſad Louiſa do?
[*Recovers the ſword.*
I cannot live—to ſee Don Francis die—
Yet worſe to live, and be Don Pedro's wife—
I muſt not live—my father bids me die.——
[*Stabs herſelf.*—DON FRANCIS *and* DE HARO *enter at the moment.*

FRANCIS.

Oh! my Louiſa—my love—my bride!—

My

My wife—my ſoul's whole treaſure—ſtay—
Thy dreadful purpoſe hold !———

LOUISA.

Ah ! my dear lord—permitted thus to live
But to receive and aid on its eſcape—
My ſoul juſt ruſhing from my bleeding breaſt. [*Fainting.*

FRANCIS.

Thou muſt not die—Oh ! lovely maid, revive—
Thy father's bleſſing beckons thee to life.

LOUISA.

It was my father's will impell'd to death—
His rigorous command I have obey'd—
My filial deſign may God forgive,
Nor rank me with the hateful ſuicide,
Who ruſhes on his fate from paſſion ſtorms,
And dies the martyr of his guilty hand.
Retard me not—now on the marge of death—
My conſcious ſoul, unſtain'd by one baſe act,
Looks back ſerene on life's tempeſtuous ſurge,
Nor feels a pang, but for my Francis' ſake ;—
Yet bliſs is crown'd by dying in his arms. [*Dies.*

FRANCIS.

I'll catch in ether that laſt balmy breath,
And meet her gentle ſpirit in the ſkies.———

[*Falls on his ſword.*

DE HARO.

Ha ! Francis, hold—nor cowardly revolt
From nature's poſt, aſſign'd by nature's lord.
Heaven has decreed the juſt, the brave, ſhould die,
But 'tis a daſtard ſoul that fears to live.

FRANCIS.

Life loſt all worth in her expiring ſigh—
Adieu, my friend, for time has loſt its charms.

The

The free born mind mounts upwards with the gods,
And ſoars and ſpurns a baſe, ignoble world. [*Dies.*

DE HARO.

Alas! the horrors of this awful hour—
What miſery's entail'd on all mankind
But thoſe who riſe and view life from the ſtars!—
Oh! thou whoſe word directs the pointed flame,
When the blue lightnings curl about the clouds,
And thunders roll acroſs the ragged vault,
Let down thy benediction from the ſkies!—
To virtue bend the wayward mind of man—
Let not the father blaſt his children's peace
By rancour—pride—and curſed party rage;—
Let civil feuds no more diſtract the ſoul—
Blaſt the dark fiends who wake mankind to war,
And make the world a counterpart to hell.

[*Exeunt Omnes.*

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

To Mrs. MONTAGUE, *Author of* "OBSERVATIONS *on the* GENIUS *and* WRITINGS *of* SHAKESPEARE."

WILL *Montague*, whoſe critic pen adds praiſe,
Ev'n to a Shakeſpeare's bold exalted lays;
Who points the faults in ſweet Corneille's page,
Sees all the errors of the Gallic ſtage—
Corrects Voltaire with a ſuperior hand,
Or traces genius in each diſtant land?
Will ſhe acroſs the Atlantic ſtretch her eye,
Look o'er the main, and view the weſtern ſky;
And there Columbia's infant drama ſee—
Reflect that Britain taught us to be free;
Survey with candour what ſhe can't approve;
Let local fondneſs yield to gen'rous love;
And, if fair truth forbids her to commend,
Then let the critic ſoften to the friend.

The bard of Avon juſtly bears the meed
Of fond applauſe, from Tyber to the Tweed;

Each humbler muſe at diſtance may admire,
But none to Shakeſpeare's fame ere dare aſpire.
And if your iſle, where he ſo long has charm'd,
If Britain's ſons, when by his mantle warm'd,
Have ſoar'd in vain to reach his lofty quill,
Nature to paint with true Shakeſpearean ſkill—
A ſiſter's hand may wreſt a female pen,
From the bold outrage of imperious men.

If gentle Montague my chaplet raiſe,
Critics may frown, or mild good nature praiſe;
Secure I'll walk, and placid move along,
And heed alike their cenſure or their ſong;
I'll take my ſtand by fam'd Parnaſſus' ſide,
And for a moment feel a poet's pride.

Plymouth, July 10, 1790.

To TORRISMOND.

A young Gentleman educated in Europe, recommended to the Author's acquaintance, by a Friend of diſtinction.

My ſoul is ſicken'd when I ſee the youth,
That ſports and trifles with eternal truth.

WHEN ancient Britain pip'd the ruſtic lays,
And tun'd to woden notes of vocal praiſe,
The diſmal dirges caught the liſtening throng,
And ruder geſtures join'd the antique ſong.

Then the grey druid's grave, majeſtic air,
The frantic prieſteſs, with diſhevell'd hair
And flaming torch, ſpoke ſuperſtition's reign;
While elfin damſels dancing o'er the plain,
Allur'd the vulgar by the myſtic ſcene,
To keep long vigils on the ſacred green.

Then Gothic bards might dreſs the magic tale,
And monkiſh legends over truth prevail;
As weak credulity, with hood wink'd eyes,
Had never peep'd behind the thin diſguiſe—
The party colour'd veil, at once inwove
With ignorance, and ſome faint fears of Jove;
Wrought up to madneſs by the crafty prieſt,
While artful politicians ſaw the jeſt,
And laugh'd at virtue as a ſtate machine,
And engine fit the multitude to rein;
With more facility to rule mankind,
They lent their efforts to obſcure the mind.
Folly and fraud the manly powers debas'd,
And from the ſoul th' etherial ſpark eras'd,

Plung'd

Plung'd in the depth of black and dreary night,
No eye could trace one avenue to light.

But from the dark impenetrable ſhade,
Reaſon appear'd, a bright, a heav'n born maid;
The moral ſyſtem, nature's early code,
Improv'd by reaſon, and the voice of God,
Diſpell'd the miſts of error's tenfold maze,
And truth triumphant, held a crown of bays.

Celeſtial reaſon, thus again reſtor'd,
Her gentle wand through all the world ador'd,
She reign'd reſplendent o'er the human mind,
With brow worn ſcience, hand in hand combin'd,
To prove the powers of the active ſoul,
That mounts from earth to nature's fartheſt pole;
'Till Anglia boaſts the birth of Locke and Boyle,
And Newton's name adorn'd Britannia's iſle;
O'er the learn'd world, this heavenly genius ſhone,
And light diffus'd as the meridian ſun,
Through the vaſt ſolar ſyſtem late defin'd,
By vaſt exertions of his godlike mind;
And while inveſtigating nature's laws,
He ſtill defended virtue's ſacred cauſe:
At once he taught philoſophy to ſhine,
Own'd and rever'd the oracles divine;
That pens inſpir'd had op'd a brighter day,
That revelation lent its heavenly ray
To lift, exalt, and elevate the ſoul,
To ſcale the ſtars, and ſoar from pole to pole.

But as the cleareſt hemiſphere diſplays
The wandering ſtar, amidſt the radiant blaze,
Of orb o'er orb, that aids the nightly dance,
Of planets rolling through the broad expanſe;

Some

Some viſionary ſouls have loſt their way,
Eccentric wandering 'mid the noon tide ray.

Thus man, frail man, to wide extremes ſo prone,
Truth's perfect path by him ſo little known,
That when emerging from the diſmal gloom,
Of night and fable, wrap'd in chaos' womb;
Some danc'd and play'd around the boundleſs ſhore,
The depths of erudition juſt ſkim'd o'er;
Nurs'd in refinements of a ſceptic age,
They ſpurn the precepts of the ſacred page;
Hold revelation but the dream of pride,
The wiſh of man to be to God ally'd:
Thus the vain reptile of a fleeting hour,
Preſumes he knows the plenitude of power.

Through nature's ſyſtem, through her grand deſign,
He ſtrips the veil from Providence divine;
Sees clearly through the vaſt myſterious plan,
Can prove that Heaven forgot its creature, man:

That when to rationals God firſt gave birth,
And chain'd them down to this low diſtant earth,
To guide their path lent not one friendly beam,
No intimation of his will ſupreme;
But the weak reaſoner's left to grope his way,
To Jove, Jehovah, or to Bacchus pray,
As he by chance, or caprice, may be led,
Born in Italia, or in Athens bred.

Loſt in wild paſſion—prattling much of fate,
His higheſt hope a non exiſting ſtate;
Yet fears alarm, or ſecret dread of ſhame;
His brutal wiſhes, pride, or love of fame,

Alternate drag him with magnectic force,
'Till infidelity's his laſt reſource;
By turns exploding grace, free will, and fate,
Still apprehenſive of ſome future ſtate,
Suſpenſe diſtracts his oſcillating brain,
'Till —— aſſures him death ſhall end his pain.

Ah! Torriſmond! poor trembling, doubting youth,
Pale with thy fears, and yet affronting truth;
Come, my young friend, forſake the ſceptic road,
And tread the paths ſuperiour genius trod;
Leave all the modern metaphyſic fools,
To reaſon on by falſe logiſtic rules;
Leave all the quibblers of a mimic age,
By rote to cavil at th' inſpired page;
Let learned traſh their arguments ſuſtain,
While common ſenſe, ejected from their brain,
They through each jarring incoherence run,
Until entangled in the web they've ſpun,
They all things doubt but their ſuperiour ſenſe,
And live and die the dupes of dark ſuſpenſe.

Come, ſpite of low born pleaſures, nobly riſe,
And ſeek true happineſs beyond the ſkies,
Ere this ſhort whirl of fancy'd joys are o'er,
When time ſhall land thee on ſome unknown ſhore;
Where truth array'd in ſilvern robes ſhall ſtand,
With juſtice' ſword uplifted in her hand.

When thy ſoul quivers on the awful marge,
And death throws ope eternity's broad verge;
When conſcience whiſpers, thy probation's o'er,
Or her ſoft voice may loud as thunder roar;

With

With what amaze you'll find the chriſtian ſcheme
Is not the product of a brain ſick dream.

Then not the wits who grace the liſts of fame,
Sanction'd by Hume, or by a Shaftſbury's name,
Or celebrated Voltaire's pointed pen,
Who cheats the weak, or charms ev'n wiſer men;
Nor all the train of infidels combin'd,
Can ſooth a moment thy immortal mind.

A POLITICAL

A POLITICAL REVERIE.

As fairy forms, the elfin airy train,
And ſylphs, ſometimes moleſt the learned brain,
Deluſive dreams the matron's boſom ſwell,
And, ancient maids, the fancied viſion, tell;
So beaux and belles ſee routs and balls in dreams,
And drowſy preachers chop polemic themes;
The ſtateſman's dream, in theory creates,
New perfect forms, to govern broken ſtates.

Logiſtic ſcribblers dream of ſleeping ſouls,
And dreaming bucks drown reaſon o'er their bowls;
The doubting deiſt dreams of Styx and fate,
Yet laughs at fables of a future ſtate,
'Till Charon's boat ſhall land him on a ſhore
Of which the dreamer never dreamt before:
As ſportive dreams infeſt all ranks of men,
A dream, the viſionary world, may read again.

[*This Reverie was firſt publiſhed, January, 1774, previous to the breaking out of the Civil War, while America was oſcillating between a Reſiſtance by Arms and her ancient Love and Loyalty to Britain.*]

LET Grecian bards and Roman poets tell,
How Hector fought, and how old Priam fell;
Paint armies ravaging the 'Ilian coaſt,
Shew fields of blood and mighty battles loſt;
Let mad Caſſandra, with diſhevell'd hair,
With ſtreaming eye, and frantic boſom bare,
Tell dark preſages, and ill boding dreams,
Of murder, rapine, and the ſolemn themes,
Of ſlaughter'd cities, and their ſinking ſpires,
By Grecian rage wrap'd in avening fires;

To

To bolder pens I leave the tragic tale,
While ſome kind muſe from Tempe's gentle vale,
With ſofter ſymphony ſhall touch the ſtring,
And happier tidings from Parnaſſus bring.

Not Cæſar's name, nor Philip's bolder ſon,
Who ſigh'd and wept, when he'd one world undone;
Who drop'd a tear, though not from pity's ſource,
But grief, to find ſome bound to brutal force,
Shall tune my harp, or touch the warbling ſtring;
No bold deſtroyers of mankind I ſing;
Theſe plunderers of men I'll greatly ſcorn,
And dream of nations, empires yet unborn.

I look with rapture at the diſtant dawn,
And view the glories of the opening morn,
When juſtice holds his ſceptre o'er the land,
And reſcues freedom from a tyrant's hand;
When patriot ſtates in laurel crowns may riſe,
And ancient kingdoms court them as allies;
Glory and valour ſhall be here diſplay'd,
And virtue rear her long dejected head;
Her ſtandard plant beneath theſe gladden'd ſkies,
Her fame extend, and arts and ſcience riſe;
While empire's lofty ſpreading ſails unfurl'd,
Roll ſwiftly on towards the weſtern world.

Long ſhe's forſook her Aſiatic throne,
And leaving Afric's barb'rous burning zone,
On the broad ruins of Rome's haughty power
Erected ramparts round fair Europe's ſhore;
But in thoſe blaſted climes no more preſides,
She, o'er the vaſt Atlantic ſurges rides,
Viſits Columbia's diſtant fertile plains,
Where liberty, a happy goddeſs, reigns.

No deſpot here ſhall rule with awful ſway,
Nor orphan's ſpoils become the minion's prey;
No more the widow'd bleeding boſom mourns,
Nor injur'd cities weep their ſlaughter'd ſons;
For then each tyrant, by the hand of fate,
And ſtanding troops, the bane of every ſtate,
Forever ſpurn'd, ſhall be remov'd as far
As bright Heſperus from the polar ſtar;
Freedom and virtue ſhall united reign,
And ſtretch their empire o'er the wide domain.
On a broad baſe the commonwealth ſhall ſtand,
When lawleſs power withdraws its impious hand;
When crowns and ſceptres are grown uſeleſs things,
Nor petty pretors plunder here for kings.

Then bleſs'd religion, in her pureſt forms,
Beyond the reach of perſecuting ſtorms,
In pureſt azure, gracefully array'd,
In native majeſty ſhall ſtand diſplay'd,
'Till courts revere her ever ſacred ſhrine,
And nobles feel her influence divine;
Princes and peaſants catch the glorious flame,
And liſping infants praiſe Jehovah's name.

But while methought this commonwealth would riſe,
And bright Millenian proſpects ſtruck my eyes,
I wept Britannia, once Europa's pride,
To fame and virtue long ſhe ſtood ally'd;
This glorious queen, the miſtreſs of the iſles,
Torn up by faction, and inteſtine broils,
Became the prey of each rapacious arm,
Strip'd and diſrob'd of every native charm.

Strong and erect, like ſome fair poliſh'd tower,
She long defy'd each neighb'ring hoſtile power,

And

And ſent her brave and valiant ſons in queſt
Of foreign realms, who by no fear repreſs'd,
The ſinking cliffs of Europe's happy ſhore,
They left behind, new climates to explore.

They quitted plenty, luxury and eaſe,
Tempted the dangers of the frozen ſeas—
While hope's ſoft breezes fann'd the ſwelling ſails,
And fame and glory ſpurn'd the ruder gales,
And ſmooth'd the ſurge that roll'd from ſhore to ſhore,
A race of heroes ſafely wafted o'er.
Who pitch'd their tents beneath the diſmal ſhade,
Where wild woods roar'd, and ſavages betray'd;
Cities they rear'd around barbarian coaſts,
And planted vineyards o'er the barren waſtes.
In Britain's lap the rich produce was pour'd,
(Which heaven, benignant, plentifully ſhower'd,)
'Till ſhe, ungrateful, join'd an impious band,
And forging ſhackles with a guilty hand,
Broke the firm union whence her vigour grew,
Diſſolv'd the bands, and cut the ſinews through.

Here a bright form, with ſoft majeſtic grace,
Beckon'd me on through vaſt unmeaſur'd ſpace;
Beſide the margin of the vaſt profound,
Wild echos play'd and cataracts rebound;
Beyond the heights of nature's wide expanſe,
Where mov'd ſuperb the planetary dance,
Light burſt on light, and ſuns o'er ſuns diſplay'd
The ſyſtem perfect, nature's God had laid.

This ſcale of altitude preſented whole,
The various movements of the human ſoul;
Starting, I cry'd—"Oh! ſacred form forgive,
Or me from yonder nether world remove;—

Has

Has freedom's genius left Britannia's ſhore?
And muſt her ſleeping patriots live no more?
Ariſe, ye venerable ſhades! inſpire,
Each languid ſoul with patriotic fire;
'Till every boſom feels a noble flame,
And emulates a Locke, or Sydney's name."

The ſeraph ſmil'd ineffably ſerene,
And ſhew'd me truth, inſcrib'd on her bright mien:
She ſaid—"The glow from breaſt to breaſt is ſpread,
From ſire to ſon the latent ſpark's convey'd;
Let thoſe bleſs'd ſhades reſt in their ſacred urns,
Lie undiſturb'd—the glorious ardour burns,
Though far transferr'd from their lov'd native ſoil.
Virtue turn'd pale, and freedom left the iſle,
When ſhe ſtretch'd out her avaricious hand,
And ſhew'd her ſons her hoſtile bloody wand;
United millions parried back the blow,
Britain recoil'd, and ſadly learnt to know,
Cities with cities leagu'd, and town with town,
She trembled at her fate when half undone."

Think not this all a viſionary ſcene,
For he who wields the grand, the vaſt machine;
Who bids the morn from eaſtern ocean riſe,
And paler Cynthia cheer the midnight ſkies;
Who holds the balance—who ſtretch'd out the line—
O'er all creation form'd the grand deſign,
Ten thouſand worlds to ſcatter o'er the plain,
And ſpread new glories through his wide domain;
Who rules the ſtars, and taught the rolling ſpheres
To meaſure round the quick revolving years;
At awful diſtance from his radiant throne,
Suſpended, this terreſtial ball hangs down;

Yet

Yet ſtill preſides and watches o'er the fates,
Of all the kingdoms that his power creates.

Ere he winds up the cloſing act of time,
And draws the veil from ſyſtems more ſublime,
In ſwift progreſſion, weſtward throws the bowl,
'Till mighty empire crowns the ſpacious whole.

Then this far diſtant corner of the earth,
Shall boaſt her Decii's and her Fabii's birth;
When the young heroes, wondering, ſhall be told,
That Britain barter'd worth for luſt of gold;
How, loſt in luxury, her ſilken ſons,
Forgot her Edwards claim'd the Bourbon crowns;
That tyrants trembled on their tott'ring throne,
And haughty monarchs fear'd Britannia's frown.

But ah! how tarniſh'd her illuſtrious name,
Deſpoil'd of wealth, of grandeur, and of fame!
Buried beneath her complicated crimes,
A ſad memento to ſucceeding times:
Diſmay'd, ſhe yet may lift her ſuppliant hand,
And aſk protection from this injur'd land;
Whoſe peaceful ſons will draw oblivion o'er
Unnumber'd wrongs, and raſe the blacken'd ſcore:
Yet heave a ſigh, and drop the tender tear,
And weep Britannia's puniſhment ſevere;
When they reſearching o'er ſome future chart,
Scarce find the ſeat of mighty Brunſwick's court;
For neighbouring ſtates may ſeize the venal iſle,
And Gallic princes diſtribute the ſpoil.
The lion, proſtrate on the naked ſtrand,
May ſee the lilies waving o'er the land;
May ſee Columbia's embrio pendants play,
And infant navies cut the watry way;

Fame's outſtretch'd wing may on the eaſtern gales
Leave the proud Thames, and ſpread her whiten'd ſails.

While riſing empire rears her purple creſt,
Triumphant commerce hails the gladden'd weſt,
And ſteers her courſe to Zembla's frozen pole,
Or lands in India, free from the control
Of baſe, monopolizing men, combin'd
To plunder millions, and enſlave mankind.
From Florida to Nova Scotian ſhores
She pours her treaſures and unlades her ſtores;
Round all the globe ſhe ſails from ſea to ſea,
And ſmiles and proſpers, only when ſhe's free.

But here the ſweet enchanting viſion fled,
And darken'd clouds flaſh'd lightnings o'er my head;
The ſeraph ſolemn ſtretch'd abroad her hand,
The ſtars grew pale beneath her burniſh'd wand;
On her pale front diſguſt and ſorrow hung,
And awful accents trembled on her tongue.

Behold! ſhe ſaid, before theſe great events,
Abſorb'd in tears, America laments;
Laments the ravage of her fruitful plains,
While crimſon ſtreams the peaceful villa ſtains.

The weeping matron ſighs in poignant pain
O'er her laſt hope, in the rude battle ſlain:
The bleeding boſom of the aged ſire,
Pierc'd by his ſon, will in his arms expire;
For death promiſcuous flies from ev'ry hand,
When faction's ſword is brandiſh'd o'er the land;
When civil diſcord cuts the friendly ties,
And ſocial joy from every boſom flies;
But let the muſe forbear the ſolemn tale,
And lend once more, the "*Grecian painter's veil.*"

To

To Mr. ——————.

Alluding to a Converſation which favoured the Opinion of Fataliſm; that human Action, whether good or evil, ſprings from the Principle of ſelf Love, void of any real Benevolence, when traced up to its Source.

THOUGH ſhort, far ſhort, my pen of the ſublime,
Fate urges on, and bids me write in rhyme;
I hope my friend the effort will excuſe,
Nor blame the heart, but chide the niggard muſe.

Is it a wild enthuſiaſtic flame,
That ſwells the boſom panting after fame;
Dilates the mind, while every fail's unfurl'd,
To catch the plaudits of a gazing world?
Is there no permanent, no ſteady pole,
To point us on, and guide the wandering ſoul?
Does prejudice and paſſion rule mankind?
Are there no ſprings that actuate the mind,
Whoſe deep meanders have a nobler ſource,
Than vain ſelf love, to guide their winding courſe?

The gen'rous ardour, ſtil'd benevolence,
Is it all art, to gratify the ſenſe?
Or give imagination further ſcope?
That airy queen, who guides the helm of hope,
Holds a falſe mirror to the dazzled ſight;
A dim perſpective, a deluſive light,
That ſwells the bubbles of life's ſhorten'd ſpan,
While wiſdom laughs at the deluded man,
Wrap'd in ecſtatics, by imagin'd fame,
When the next moment may blot out his name.

Can't

Can't the wiſe precepts of a Plato's ſchool,
Or a divine—a ſtill more perfect rule,
Arouſe, exalt, and animate the ſoul
Self to renounce, and riſe above control
Of narrow paſſions, that the man debaſe,
And from his breaſt his maker's image raſe;
Or are the fetters that enſlave the mind
Of ſuch a ſtrong and adamantine kind,
So firmly lock'd, and ſo ſecurely riv'd,
The more we ſtrive, the more we're ſtill deceiv'd;
Are truth and friendſhip no where to be found,
And patriot virtue nothing but a ſound?
Then may a Cæſar equal honours claim,
With gen'rous Brutus' celebrated name:
For the poor tribute of a ſhort applauſe,
One ſtabb'd a tyrant, trampling on the laws;
While the proud deſpot mark'd his baneful way,
With virtue's tears, and triumph'd o'er his prey.

Cæſar enſlav'd, and Brutus would have freed,
Self, the ſole point in which they're both agreed.

Self love, that ſtimulus to nobler aims,
Bade Nero light the capital in flames;
Bade Borgia act a moſt infernal part,
Or Scipio to triumph o'er his heart;
Bids ——— betray his native land,
And his baſe brother lend his perjur'd hand,
While freedom weeps, and heav'n forbears to ſhed
Its awful vengeance on the guilty head.

If ſuch is life, and fancy throws the bowl,
And appetite and caprice rule the whole;
If virtuous friendſhip has no ſolid baſe,
But falſe deception holds the ſacred place;

Then

Then from thy mem'ry raſe out every line,
Nor recollect a ſentiment of mine,
But dark oblivion's ſable veil draw o'er,
And I'll forbear to interrupt thee more.

For if vice boaſts her origin the ſame
With ſocial joy and patriotic flame,
Then I muſt wiſh to bid the world farewel,
Turn Anchoret, and chooſe ſome lonely cell,
Beneath ſome peaceful hermitage reclin'd,
To weep the miſery of all mankind,
'Till days and years, till time ſhall ceaſe to roll,
And truth eternal ſtrike the wondering ſoul.

On a SURVEY *of the* HEAVENS.

DOES there an infidel exiſt?
Let him look up—he can't reſiſt,
Theſe proofs of Deity—ſo clear,
He muſt the architect revere,
Whene'er to heaven he lifts his eyes,
And there ſurveys the ſpangled ſkies;
The glitt'ring ſtars, the worlds that ſhine,
And ſpeak their origin divine,
Bid him adore, and proſtrate fall,
And own one Lord, ſupreme o'er all.

One God this mighty fabrick guides,
Th' etherial circles he divides;
And meaſures out the diſtant bound,
Of each revolving planet's round;
Prevents the univerſal jar,
That might from one eccentric ſtar,
Toſs'd in the wide extended ſpace,
At once—a thouſand worlds diſplace.

What elſe ſupports the rolling ſpheres;
Nought but Almighty power appears,
The vaſt unnumber'd orbs to place,
And ſcatter o'er the boundleſs ſpace,
Myriads of worlds of purer light,
Our adoration to excite,
And lead the wandering mind of man,
To contemplate the glorious plan.

Not even Newton's godlike mind,
Nor all the ſages of mankind,

Could

Could e'er assign another cause,
Though much they talk of nature's laws;
Of gravity's attractive force,
They own the grand, eternal source,
Who, from the depths of chaos' womb,
Prepar'd the vaulted, spacious dome;
He spake—a vast foundation's laid,
And countless globes thereon display'd.

His active power still sustains
Their weight, amidst the heavenly plains;
Infinite goodness yet protects,
All perfect wisdom still directs
Their revolutions;—knows the hour,
When rapid time's resistless pow'r,
In mighty ruin will involve,
And God—this grand machine dissolve.

Then time and death shall both expire,
And in the universal fire,
These elements shall melt away,
To usher in eternal day.

Amazing thought!—Is it decreed,
New earth and heavens, shall these succeed?
More glorious far—still more august!
In his omnific arm we trust.

But how this system 'twill excel,
Nor Angel's voice, or tongue can tell;
Nor human thought so high can soar;
His works survey, and God adore.

On the DEATH *of Mrs.* S.———, *who died within a few Days after her* MARRIAGE.

THE grave with open mouth deſtroys,
Life's choiceſt bleſſings, pureſt joys.

The gay Orinda's pleaſing charms,
Allur'd young Selim to her arms;
They taſted bliſs one happy moon,
Nor thought their joys could end ſo ſoon,
Or dreamt that ſuch a gueſt as Death
Would interrupt the bridal mirth;
But lo! his ſable wings are ſpread,
Orinda's number'd with the dead.

Thus have I ſeen the opening flower
That decorates the nuptial bow'r,
Its odours ſhed, its bright array
Rival the luſtre of the day;
But ere the glorious morning ſun
Had reach'd the central point of noon,
The violets fade, the roſes die,
So ſunk the luſtre of her eye.
The valiant Selim quits the prize,
Reluctant yields the ſacrifice;
Trys in the laurell'd field of fame,
To loſe the lov'd Orinda's name;
But, not the warlike, hoſtile ſcene,
That purples o'er the native green,
Nor the hoarſe trumpet, loud and ſhrill,
The plaintive voice of grief could quell.
Selim ſtill feels the keener ſmart
That rankles in his bleeding heart;

He

He ruſhes on amid the plain,
And courts the ſword to end his pain:
He fell—but ſmil'd in Death's embrace,
And cry'd, here ends the idle chace;
Wealth, pleaſure, honour, airy fame,
I've prov'd are but an empty name:
He kiſs'd the reeking ſteel, and ſaid,
I fly to ſeek Orinda's ſhade.

The SQUABBLE *of the* SEA NYMPHS; *or the* SACRIFICE *of the* TUSCARAROES.

The important political event of 1774, *when ſeveral cargoes of teas were poured into the ſea, has been replete with mighty conſequences, and will never be forgotten in the hiſtory of American independence. But the author's own opinion of the equity or policy of this meaſure is not to be collected from a political ſally, written at the requeſt of a particular friend, now in one of the higheſt grades of American rank.*

BRIGHT Phœbus drove his rapid car amain,
And plung'd his ſteeds beyond the weſtern plain,
Behind a golden ſkirted cloud to reſt.
Ere ebon night had ſpread her ſable veſt,
And drawn her curtain o'er the fragrant vale,
Or Cynthia's ſhadows dreſs'd the lonely dale,
The heroes of the Tuſcararo tribe,*
Who ſcorn'd alike a fetter or a bribe,
In order rang'd, and waited freedom's nod,
To make an offering to the wat'ry god.

Grey Neptune roſe, and from his ſea green bed,
He wav'd his trident o'er his oozy head;
He ſtretch'd, from ſhore to ſhore, his regal wand,
And bade the river deities attend:
Triton's hoarſe clarion ſummon'd them by name,
And from old ocean call'd each wat'ry dame.

In council met to regulate the ſtate,
Among their godſhips roſe a warm debate,
What

* The cargoes were deſtroyed by a number of people, diſguiſed in the habit of the Aborigines.

What luſcious draught they next ſhould ſubſtitute,
That might the palates of celeſtials ſuit,
As Nectar's ſtream no more meandering rolls,
The food ambroſial of their ſocial bowls
Profuſely ſpent;—nor, can Scamander's ſhore,
Yield the fair ſea nymphs one ſhort banquet more.

The Titans all with one accord arous'd,
To travel round Columbia's coaſt propos'd;
To rob and plunder every neighb'ring vine,
(Regardleſs of Nemiſis' ſacred ſhrine;)
Nor leave untouch'd the peaſant's little ſtore,
Or think of right, while demi gods have power.

But ere on a decided mode agreed,
They, nor great Neptune, farther dare proceed,
'Till every goddeſs of the ſtreams and lakes,
And leſſer deities of fens and brakes—
With all the nymphs that ſwim around the iſles,
Deign'd to give ſanction by approving ſmiles:
For females have their influence o'er kings,
Nor wives, nor miſtreſſes, were uſeleſs things,
Ev'n to the gods of ancient Homer's page;
Then ſure, in this polite and poliſh'd age,
None will neglect the ſex's ſage advice,
When they engage in any point ſo nice,
As to forbid the choice nectareus ſip,
And offer bohea to the roſy lip.

Proud Amphytrite rejected in diſdain,
Refus'd the gift, and left the wat'ry main,
With ſervile Proteus lagging by her ſide,
To take advantage of the ſhifting tide;
To catch a ſmile, or pick up golden ſands,
Either from Plutus, or the naked ſtrands:

Long

Long practis'd—easy he assumes the shape
Of fox, or panther, crocodile, or ape;
When 'tis his int'rest, his step dame he'll aid,
One pebble more, and Amphytrite's betray'd.

A flaming torch she took in either hand,
(And as fell discord reign'd throughout the land,
Was well appriz'd the centaurs would conspire;)
Resolv'd to set the western world on fire,
By scattering the weed of Indian shores;
Or worse, to lodge it in Pygmalion's stores:
But if the artifice should not succeed,
Then, in revenge, attempt some bolder deed;
For while old ocean's mighty billows roar,
Or foaming surges lash the distant shore,
Shall goddesses regale like woodland dames?
First let Chinesan herbage feed the flames.

But all the Nereids whisper'd murmurs round,
And craggy cliffs reecho'd back the sound;
'Till fair Salacia perch'd upon the rocks,
The rival goddess wav'd her yellow locks,
Proclaim'd, hysonia shall assuage their grief,
With choice souchong, and the imperial leaf.

The champions of the Tuscararan race,
(Who neither hold, nor even wish a place,
While faction reigns, and tyranny presides,
And base oppression o'er the virtues rides;
While venal measures dance in silken sails,
And avarice o'er earth and sea prevails;
While luxury creates such mighty feuds,
E'en in the bosoms of the demi gods;)
Lent their strong arm in pity to the fair,
To aid the bright Salacia's generous care;

Pour'd

Pour'd a profuſion of delicious teas,
Which, wafted by a ſoft favonian breeze,
Supply'd the wat'ry deities, in ſpite
Of all the rage of jealous Amphytrite.

The fair Salacia, victory, victory, ſings,
In ſpite of heroes, demi gods, or kings;
She bids defiance to the ſervile train,
The pimps and ſycophants of George's reign.

The virtuous daughters of the neighb'ring mead,
In graceful ſmiles approv'd the glorious deed;
(And though the Syrens left their coral beds,
Juſt o'er the ſurface lifted up their heads,
And ſung ſoft peans to the brave and fair,
'Till almoſt caught in the deluſive ſnare
To ſink ſecurely in a golden dream,
And taſte the ſweet inebriating ſtream,
Which, though a repaſt for the wat'ry maids,
Is baneful poiſon to the mountain naiades;)
They ſaw delighted from the inland rocks,
O'er the broad deep pour'd out Pandora's box;
They join'd, and fair Salacia's triumph ſung,
Wild echo, o'er the bounding ocean rung;
The ſea nymphs heard, and all the ſportive train,
In ſhaggy treſſes danc'd around the main,
From ſouthern lakes, down to the northern rills,
And ſpread confuſion round N——— hills.

To a Young Lady,

On ſhewing an excellent Piece of Painting, *much faded.*

COME, and attend, my charming maid;
See how the gayeſt colours fade;
As beauteous paintings loſe their dye,
Age ſinks the luſtre of your eye.

Then ſeize the minutes as they paſs;
Behold! how ſwift runs down the glaſs;
The haſty ſands that meaſure time,
Point you to pleaſures more ſublime;
And bid you ſhun the flow'ry path,
That cheats the millions into death.

Snatch every moment time ſhall give,
And uniformly virtuous live;
Let no vain cares retard thy ſoul,
But ſtrive to reach the happy goal;
When pale, when unrelenting Death,
Shall ſay, reſign life's vital breath!
May you, ſwift as the morning lark
That ſtems her courſe to heav'n's high arch,
Leave every earthly care, and ſoar,
Where numerous ſeraphims adore;
Thy pinions ſpread and wafted high,
Beyond the blue etherial ſky,
May you there chant the glorious lays,
The carols of eternal praiſe,
To that exhauſtleſs ſource of light,
Who rules the ſhadows of the night,
Who lends each orb its ſplendid ray,
And points the glorious beams of day.

Time

Time and eternity he holds;
Nor all eternity unfolds,
The glories of Jehovah's name;
Nor higheſt angels can proclaim,
The wonders of his boundleſs grace,
They bow, and veil before his face.

What then ſhall mortals of an hour,
But bend ſubmiſſive to his power;
And learn at wiſdom's happy lore,
Nature's great author to adore.

To the Hon. J. WINTHROP, Esq.

Who, on the American Determination, in 1774, to ſuſpend all Commerce with Britain, (except for the real Neceſſaries of life) requeſted a poetical Liſt of the Articles the Ladies might compriſe under that Head.

FREEDOM may weep, and tyranny prevail,
And ſtubborn patriots either frown, or rail;
Let them of grave economy talk loud,
Prate prudent meaſures to the liſt'ning crowd;
With all the rhetoric of ancient ſchools,
Deſpiſe the mode, and faſhion's modiſh fools;
Or ſhew fair liberty, who us'd to ſmile,
The guardian goddeſs of Britannia's iſle,
In ſable weeds, anticipate the blow,
Aim'd at Columbia by her royal foe;
And mark the period when inglorious kings
Deal round the curſes that a Churchill ſings.

But what's the anguiſh of whole towns in tears,
Or trembling cities groaning out their fears?
The ſtate may totter on proud ruin's brink,
The ſword be brandiſh'd, or the bark may ſink;
Yet ſhall Clariſſa check her wanton pride,
And lay her female ornaments aſide?
Quit all the ſhining pomp, the gay parade,
The coſtly trappings that adorn the maid?
What! all the aid of foreign looms refuſe!
(As beds of tulips ſtrip'd of richeſt hues,
Or the ſweet bloom that's nip'd by ſudden froſt,
Clariſſa reigns no more a favorite toaſt.
For what is virtue, or the winning grace,
Of ſoft good humour, playing round the face;

Or

Or what thoſe modeſt antiquated charms,
That lur'd a Brutus to a Portia's arms;
Or all the hidden beauties of the mind,
Compar'd with gauze, and taſſels well combin'd?

This mighty theme produc'd a long debate,
On the beſt plan to ſave a ſinking ſtate;
The oratorial fair, as they inclin'd,
Freely diſcuſs'd, and frankly ſpake their mind.

Lamira wiſh'd that freedom might ſucceed,
But to ſuch terms what female ere agreed?
To Britiſh marts forbidden to repair,
(Where ev'ry lux'ry tempts the blooming fair,)
Equals the rigour of thoſe ancient times
When Pharaoh, harden'd as a G—— in crimes,
Plagu'd Iſrael's race, and tax'd them by a law,
Demanding brick, when deſtitute of ſtraw;
Miraculouſly led from Egypt's port,
They lov'd the faſhions of the tyrant's court;
Sigh'd for the leeks, and waters of the Nile,
As we for gewgaws from Britannia's iſle;
That haughty iſle, whoſe mercenary hand,
Spreads wide confuſion round this fertile land,
Deſtroys the concord, and breaks down the ſhrine,
By virtue rear'd, to harmony divine.

Prudentia ſigh'd—ſhall all our country mourn,
A powerful deſpot's low'ring, haughty frown,
Whoſe hoſtile mandates, ſent from venal courts,
Rob the fair vintage, and blockade our ports;
While troops of guards are planted on each plain,
Whoſe crimes contagious, youth and beauty ſtain?
Fierce rancour blazen'd on each breaſt's diſplay'd,
And for a creſt, a gorgon's ſnaky head.

The good, the wife, the prudent, and the gay,
Mingle their tears, and ſighs for ſighs repay;
Deep anxious thought each gen'rous boſom fills,
How to avert the dread approaching ills;
Let us reſolve on a ſmall ſacrifice,
And in the pride of Roman matrons riſe;
Good as Cornelia, or a Pompey's wife,
We'll quit the uſeleſs vanities of life.
Amidſt loud diſcord, ſadneſs, and diſmay,
Hope ſpread her wing, and flit acroſs the away:
Thanks to the ſex, by heavenly hand deſign'd,
Either to bleſs, or ruin all mankind.

A ſharp debate enſu'd on wrong and right,
A little warm, 'tis true, yet all unite,
At once to end the great politic ſtrife,
And yield up all but real wants of life.

But does Helvidius, vigilant and wiſe,
Call for a ſchedule, that may all compriſe?
'Tis ſo contracted, that a Spartan ſage,
Will ſure applaud th' œconomizing age.

But if ye doubt, an inventory clear,
Of all ſhe needs, Lamira offers here;
Nor does ſhe fear a rigid Cato's frown,
When ſhe lays by the rich embroider'd gown,
And modeſtly compounds for juſt enough—
Perhaps, ſome dozens of more ſlighty ſtuff;
With lawns and luſtrings—blond, and mecklin laces,
Fringes and jewels, fans and tweezer caſes;
Gay cloaks and hats, of every ſhape and ſize,
Scarfs, cardinals, and ribbons of all dyes;
With ruffles ſtamp'd, and aprons of tambour,
Tippets and handkerchiefs, at leaſt, three ſcore;

With

With fineſt muſlins that fair India boaſts,
And the choice herbage from Chineſan coaſts;
(But while the fragrant hyſon leaf regales,
Who'll wear the homeſpun produce of the vales?
For if 'twould ſave the nation from the curſe
Of ſtanding troops; or, name a plague ſtill worſe,
Few can this choice delicious draught give up,
Though all Medea's poiſons fill the cup.)
Add feathers, furs, rich ſattins, and ducapes,
And head dreſſes in pyramidial ſhapes;
Side boards of plate, and porcelain profuſe,
With fifty ditto's that the ladies uſe;
If my poor treach'rous memory has miſs'd,
Ingenious T——l ſhall complete the liſt.
So week Lamira, and her wants ſo few,
Who can refuſe?—they're but the ſex's due.

In youth, indeed, an antiquated page,
Taught us the threatenings of an Hebrew ſage
'Gainſt wimples, mantles, curls, and criſping pins,
But rank not theſe among our modern ſins:
For when our manners are well underſtood,
What in the ſcale is ſtomacher or hood?

'Tis true, we love the courtly mein and air,
The pride of dreſs, and all the debonair;
Yet Clara quits the more dreſs'd negligee,
And ſubſtitutes the careleſs polanee;
Until ſome fair one from Britannia's court,
Some jaunty dreſs, or newer taſte import;
This ſweet temptation could not be withſtood,
Though for the purchaſe's paid her father's blood;
Though loſs of freedom were the coſtly price,
Or flaming comets ſweep the angry ſkies;

Or

Or earthquakes rattle, or volcanoes roar;
Indulge this trifle, and ſhe aſks no more:
Can the ſtern patriot Clara's ſuit deny?
'Tis beauty aſks, and reaſon muſt comply.

But while the ſex round folly's vortex play,
Say, if their lords are wiſer far than they;
Few manly boſoms feel a nobler flame,
Some cog the dye, and others win the game;
Trace their meanders to their tainted ſource,
What's the grand pole ſtar that directs their courſe?
Perhaps revenge, or ſome leſs glaring vice,
Their bold ambition, or their avarice,
Or vanity unmeaning, throw the bowl;
'Till pride and paſſion urge the narrow ſoul,
To claim the honours of that heavenly flame,
That warms the breaſt, and crowns the patriot's name.

But though your wives in fripperies are dreſs'd,
And public virtue is the minion's jeſt,
America has many a worthy name,
Who ſhall, hereafter, grace the rolls of fame.
Her good Cornelias, and her Arrias fair,
Who, death, in its moſt hideous forms, can dare,
Rather than live vain fickle fortune's ſport,
Amidſt the panders of a tyrant's court;
With a long liſt of gen'rous, worthy men,
Who ſpurn the yoke, and ſervitude diſdain;
Who nobly ſtruggle in a vicious age,
To ſtem the torrent of deſpotic rage;
Who leagu'd, in ſolemn covenant unite,
And by the manes of good Hampden plight,
That while the ſurges laſh Britannia's ſhore,
Or wild Ni'gara's cataracts ſhall roar,
And Heaven looks down, and ſanctifies the deed,
They'll fight for freedom, and for virtue bleed.

To

To FIDELIO,

Long abſent on the great public Cauſe, which agitated all America, in 1776.

THE hill tops ſmile o'er all the blooming mead,
As I alone, on *Clifford's* ſummit tread;
Traverſe the rural walks, the gurgling rills,
Survey the beauties of th' adjacent hills;
Taſte the delights of competence and health,
Each ſober pleaſure reaſon lends to wealth:
Yet o'er the lawn a whiſp'ring echo ſighs,
Thy friend is abſent—my fond heart replies—
Say—do not friendſhip's joys outweigh the whole?
'Tis ſocial converſe, animates the ſoul.
Thought interchang'd, the heavenly ſpark improves,
And reaſon brightens by the heart it loves;
While ſolitude ſits brooding o'er her cares,
She oft accelerates the ills ſhe fears;
And though fond hope with ſilken hand diſplays,
The diſtant images of halcyon days,
Her ſable brow contracts a ſolemn air,
That treads too near the threſhold of deſpair;
'Till heav'n benign the choiceſt bleſſings lend,
The balm of life, a kind and faithful friend:
This higheſt gift, by heav'n indulg'd, I claim;
Aſk, what is happineſs?—My friend, I name:
Yet while the ſtate, by fierce internal war,
Shook to the centre, aſks his zealous care,
I muſt ſubmit, and ſmile in ſolitude,
My fond affection, my ſelf love ſubdu'd:
The times demand exertions of the kind,
A patriot zeal muſt warm the female mind.

Yet

Yet, gentle hope!—come, ſpread thy ſilken wing,
And waft me forward to revolving ſpring;
Or ere the vernal equinox returns,
At worſt, before the ſummer ſolſtice burns,
May peace again erect her cheerful ſtand,
Diſperſe the ills which hover o'er the land;
May every virtuous noble minded pair,
Be far remov'd from the dread din of war;
Then each warm breaſt where gen'rous friendſhips glow,
Where all the virtues of the patriot flow,
Shall taſte each joy domeſtic life can yield,
Nor enter more the martial bloody field.

But, hark!—alas! the brave Montgomery dies,
Oh, heaven forbid that ſuch a ſacrifice,
My country or my ſex ſhould yield again,
Or ſuch rich blood pour o'er the purpled plain:
May guilty traitors fatiate the grave,
But let the ſword forever—ſpare the brave;
I weep his fall—I weep the hero ſlain;
And mingle ſighs with his Janetta's pain:
Yet while I weep, and lend the pitying ſigh,
I bow the knee, and lift my ſoul on high,
That virtue, ſtruggling with aſſiduous pains,
May free this country from deſpotic chains.
Long life I aſk, and bleſſings to deſcend,
And crown the efforts of my conſtant friend;
My early wiſh, and evening prayer the ſame,
That virtue, health, and peace, and honeſt fame,
May hover o'er thee, till time's lateſt hour,
Commiſſionate the dread reſiſtleſs power;
Then gently lay thee by thy Marcia's clay,
'Till both ſhall riſe, and [illegible] a tide of day,

Be

Be wafted on, and ſkim the ambient plains
Through lucid air, and ſee the God who reigns.

Where cherubims in borrow'd luſtre ſhine,
We'll hand in hand our grateful homage join;
Beneath his throne, where liſt'ning angels ſtand,
With raptur'd ſeraphs wait his leaſt command.

Clifford Farm, 1776.

To HONORIA, *on her* JOURNEY *to* DOVER, 1777.

FANCY, for once, her airy wing ſhall ſpread,
And ſtretch her pinions o'er the verdant mead;
But not to ſing of fierce, or hoſtile ranks,
Or heroes conq'ring on the Ganges' banks;
Nor frozen Danube, nor the Tyber's ſtream,
But happy Dover, is my gentler theme.

With good Honoria would I trace the ſcene,
The flow'ry lawns, the grots of evergreen;
The lofty elms, and all the blooming pride,
Where Dover's ſilv'ry winding waters glide;
Pleas'd with the bounties that kind nature pours
Profuſely down from her exhauſtleſs ſtores:
But yet I feel my feeble pinions droop,
Nor dare I truſt the ſilken wing of hope;
Leſt when exalted in my brittle car,
To ſail aloft as phaeton in air,
I meet the fate of that preſumptuous youth,
Whoſe mad ambition taught one ſolemn truth;
And bade dull genius tread his deſtin'd ſphere,
Nor ſcorch his wings by venturing too near,
The ſacred mount, devoted to the muſe,
And thus diſguſted, all the nine refuſe,
To dictate numbers that may flow with eaſe,
And moſt I fail, when moſt I wiſh to pleaſe.

Will the ſoft mantle of a gentle friend,
Then cover all that truth cannot commend?
Yet this, perhaps, might fruſtrate my deſign,
She, in oblivion, might enwrap each line;

For

For every portrait that my pen can paint,
To her deſcriptive eloquence is faint;
As while beſide the winding ſtream ſhe roves,
And views the proſpects from the pleaſing groves,
She lifts her heart to celebrate the hand,
That ſcatters bleſſings o'er this happy land;
This land of plenty, this delicious vine,
By heav'n mark'd out for ſome auguſt deſign.

Truth's ſacred banners may be here unfurl'd,
And genius ſpread her graces o'er the world;
Here other Boyles or Newtons yet may riſe,
And trace the wonders of the weſtern ſkies;
More than one W——p may adorn the ſeat,
Of bright Apollo's favorite retreat;
When Harvard's ſons may ſpread the arts refin'd,
Diffuſing knowledge o'er the human mind;
While every ſtar its kindly influence lends,
'Till Harvard's fame throughout the world extends.

Then ſmiling Ceres, placid and ſerene,
Shall unmoleſted her ripe vintage glean;
Sweet harmony erect her graceful head,
And happy peaſants tread the cheerful glade.

Events roll o'er, and on the wing of time,
Diſcloſe new wonders—ſyſtems more ſublime;
Yet rapid thought anticipates the ſcene,
Sees empire riſing with majeſtic mein;
When peace again ſhall glad Columbia's ſhore,
And conq'ring heroes freedom ſhall reſtore;
When troops no more are canton'd round the plain,
Nor vict'ries won, nor routed armies ſlain;
When freſh blown laurels ſpring from Warren's grave,
Freedom to dreſs, and decorate the brave,

For whom kind fortune wreathes the crown of fame,
And ſtamps th' initials of her fav'rite name;
When Waſhington, conſpicuous o'er the reſt,
By heroes, patriots, and by foes careſs'd,
May quit the field, and court the rural ſcene;
There with his friend, the good and valiant Greene,
With conſcious worth each victory review,
And ſtill Columbia's happineſs purſue.
Yet both muſt weep the cold Canadian plain,
Where a Montgom'ry, and a Wolfe were ſlain.

How have I left fair Dover's rippling ſtream,
To gurgle on, and touch'd a bolder theme!—
Forgive my wand'ring from the beauteous groves,
Where warb'ling ſongſters chant their vernal loves.

Vaſt crowded ſcenes, have ruſh'd upon the mind,
And led me far from what I firſt deſign'd.
I'll check the ſallies of my rambling muſe,
If candor theſe excurſions will excuſe:
Or if my friend, the good Helvidius, deign,
To hark a moment to the pu'rile ſtrain;
If from the wonders of the vaſt expanſe,
Where viewing long the planetary dance,
He from the ſtarry region will deſcend,
And gently chide the follies a friend;
I'll mark the cenſure as a proof ſincere
Of gen'rous friendſhip, and the frown revere;
Though it enjoins long ſilence on my pen,
The mandate I'll obey—nor write again.

LINES,

L I N E S,

Written after a very ſevere TEMPEST, *which cleared up extremely pleaſant.*

WHEN rolling thunders ſhake the ſkies,
And lightnings fly from pole to pole;
When threat'ning whirlwinds rend the air,
What terrors ſeize th' affrighted ſoul!—

Aghaſt and pale with thrilling fear,
He trembling ſtands in wild amaze;
Nor knows for ſhelter where to hide,
To ſcreen him from the livid blaze.

Happy the calm and tranquil breaſt,
That with a ſteady equal mind,
Can view thoſe flying ſhafts of death,
With heart and will at once reſign'd!—

Oh! thou Supreme Eternal King,
At whoſe command the tempeſts rage,
With equal eaſe can worlds deſtroy,
Or with a word, the ſtorm aſſuage.

And though impetuous tempeſts roar,
And penetrating flames ſurround,
Thou bid'ſt them ceaſe—the thunder's huſh'd,
And reſt and ſilence reign profound.

Thus have we ſeen thy power and might,
Adoring, we thy works ſurvey;
'Tis thou direct'ſt the pointed flame,
And thus thy goodneſs doſt diſplay.

Thou

Thou haſt compos'd the rapid winds,
And lull'd to reſt the foaming wave;
The clouds diſpers'd, each twinkling ſtar
Proclaims aloud thy power to ſave.

The ſilver moon, the glorious orbs,
That ſwim aloft in boundleſs ſpace,
Their rays reſplendent all unite,
To celebrate at once thy praiſe.

To a YOUNG GENTLEMAN, *residing in* FRANCE.

THE new year opes—the early morning dawns,
Broad ſheets of ſilver dreſs the whiten'd lawns;
Bleak winter riſes from the brindled north,
The tempeſt ſhakes, and furious blaſts pour forth.

From nature's dawn, to nature's lateſt hour,
Each ſpangled leaf beſpeaks creative pow'r;
The vernal dew drops, or autumnal breath,
That wraps the foliage in the arms of death;
The yew, the cypreſs, or the blooming roſe,
India's long ſummer, or the Lapland ſnows,
Alike proclaim, what ſceptic fools deny,
The ſoul's ſupport—a providential eye.

This glorious truth my opening lids ſurvey'd,
My grateful heart its early homage paid;
Then ſwiftly wafts its warmeſt wiſhes o'er
To find * * * on the Gallic ſhore.

"Long health, long peace, long happineſs attend,"
The lovely youth, and bring me back my friend,
Unhurt, unſhackled by the triple chains
Of folly, pride, or pleaſure's guilty ſcenes.
When he has travell'd o'er from ſtage to ſtage,
The diſtant world, and read life's gaudy page,
Oh! may he quit th' illuſive, airy chace,
And retroſpect the happy path of peace.
True happineſs conſiſts in real worth,
And makes her exit when loſt ſight of truth;
The heaven born prize is not the gift of gold,
Of princes, ſtateſmen, or whole countries ſold;

'Tis not the lap of luxury diſplay'd
In all the ſpoils of innocence betray'd;
Nor will the ſmiles of witlings or of kings,
The laugh licentious of ſuch motley things,
Give joy or peace to ſterling worth or ſenſe,
'Tis honeſt probity, with competence,
That calms the mind, and ſmooths the manly mein,
And ſhews the world true happineſs within.

Search o'er the globe—the circling ball traverſe—
Let Britiſh bards their Gothic tales rehearſe;
Let Grecian pens, or modern poets ſing,
The feats of ancients, or of Bourbon's king;
The ſage, the bard, the ſcepter'd hand, combin'd,
Have nought to barter for a virtuous mind.

The herald's page, emblazoning high birth,
The longeſt liſt of anceſtry on earth,
Ennobles not, nor dignifies the ſon,
'Till merit makes the deeds renown'd, his own.

Methinks I hear the youthful boſom ſigh,
And nature whiſper fancy's fond reply;
"Theſe old ideas are quite out of date,
Can man be happy without pomp or ſtate?
He who can wealth and pageantry diſclaim,
May mark the willows with his blighted name;
Hid in the caverns of ſome dark retreat,
And wrap'd in canvas, the wild anchoret
May weep, or rave in ſilence or deſpair,
And groans reecho with the whiſtling air."

Not ſo, my ſon, did Hercules demean,
When rival goddeſſes adorn'd the ſcene;
The Cyprian queen a thouſand lurements ſpread,
A modeſt glory crown'd Minerva's head;

Pleaſure's

Pleaſure's bright nymph new deck'd her charming face,
But virtue beckon'd with a milder grace;
Love's little urchin, by his mother taught,
Ten thouſand joys in fancy's boſom wrought;
Fond wiſhes warm'd, the youthful hero ſigh'd,
'Till *Virtue* ſhew'd him to the gods alli'd.
The ſpark celeſtial kindled in his breaſt,
The man, the hero, and the god confeſs'd;
Pleaſure turn'd pale, and drop'd her wither'd wand,
Triumphant Virtue lent her willing hand,
And led him on to every glorious deed
His anceſtors atchiev'd, or heav'n decreed.

Thy native land is big with mighty ſcenes,
And fate rolls rapid o'er her vivid greens;
What time unfolds, the muſe muſt yet conceal,
And leave a blank for bolder pens to fill;
But ere ſhe quits the dark prophetic lays,
Let her retrace, and recollect the days,
When, by the margin of the weſtern tide,
Young empire ſprung from proud oppreſſion's ſide;
The infant flouriſh'd, nurs'd by freedom's hand,
Who ſpread her banners o'er a bleeding land.

Economy, to virtue cloſe alli'd,
A frugal pair, with wiſdom by their ſide,
And ruddy health, Aurora's offspring ſmil'd,
And promis'd vigour to the new born child;
The maid, careſs'd by potentates and kings,
Rais'd high her fame, and ſpread her growing wings.

But, 'midſt the proſpect ſuddenly appear'd,
A hideous form whoſe front by heaven was fear'd;
From envy's gulph the phantom ſeem'd to riſe,
His head he rear'd, and roll'd his redden'd eyes;

His

His forky fang, and livid lip, reveal'd,
The crooked form, a gaudy veſt conceal'd ;
Large tablets mark'd the monſter's gally breaſt,
And AV'RICE ſtood conſpicuous on his creſt ;
His tainted breath infects from ſhore to ſhore,
And poiſons all the generous fountains o'er.
True public ſpirit floated down the tide,
While diſſipation danc'd by folly's ſide ;
Soft ſilken breezes fan'd her fluttering wing,
And golden ſhowers hid her guilty ſting ;
The molten calves fall proſtrate at her ſhrine,
Sip the new joys, miſtaken for divine.
A ſudden guſt, in part, the miſt diſpell'd,
And ſhew'd Columbia on a broken ſhield :
She wept, and totter'd on the rapid ſtream,
'Till it ruſh'd back, and broke the flattering dream :
Her trembling lip in quivering accents ſaid,
Alas ! am I by half my friends betray'd ?
Though noble names from diſtant realms repair,
And breathe new vigour in the northern air ;
Yet dangers threat, and diſtant thunders roar ;
Convulſive ſtorms may rage from ſhore to ſhore.

If Attic annals don't miſlead the muſe,
And old Amphyctions had their private views,
Some latent ſpark of wild, exotic growth,
Engender'd there, may flouriſh in the ſouth ;*
Ambitious Philips live in modern times,
And bold improvements make on Grecian crimes.

Yet in the field exalted heroes ſtand,
And, while he lives, may Waſhington command !

The

* This piece was written at a period when certain characters, in ſome of the ſouthern ſtates, were ſuſpected of deſigns unfavorable to the liberties of America.

The ſocial virtues claim him for their own,
An hero born, fair freedom's favorite ſon;
Freſh myrtles ſpring, and never fading bays,
Live where he fought, and mark his glorious days;
While virtue's hand enrols La Fayette's name,
And ranks him high on the bright liſt of fame.

Is thy young boſom warm'd with patriot zeal?
An ardent glow to ſerve the common weal?
Or does ambition lead thee to the field,
In war to conflict, and the faulchion wield?
From Hector's days to haughty Cæſar's time,
When ſinking Rome, ingulph'd in every crime,
When ravag'd Gaul had ſwell'd the tyrant's pride,
And crimſon torrents waſh'd the Danube's ſide;
Nor yet when Charles, and his more bloody ſon,
On carnage fed, till Europe was undone;
(The Rhine ran red, the low lands overflow'd,
And every city ſmoak'd with patriot blood:)
Yet hiſtory has never mark'd a page,
With feats more glorious than the preſent age;
No ſmitten plains, or reeking fields afford,
A fairer cauſe to draw an hero's ſword,
Than does thy country, ravag'd and diſtreſs'd,
While war's hoarſe clarion roars from eaſt to weſt.

Yet private virtue wants the youth's ſupport;
Leave all the fopperies of a foreign court;
* * * come, with every virtue fraught,
By principle and precept, early taught,
A bright example ſhine among the firſt,
Good as thy ſire—as Ariſtides juſt;
Then may thy youth and manners both engage,
And ſmile contempt on folly's pu'rile rage.

When

When wintry blaſts no more ſhall tear the plain,
And thy fond wiſhes bear thee o'er the main;
When ſoft Favonius fans the vernal breeze,
And Boreas' breath ſhall ceaſe to laſh the ſeas;
My foreſt birds ſweet warbling notes ſhall ſing,
And hail thy welcome with returning ſpring.

The long lov'd manſion that firſt gave thee birth,
The happy dome that nurs'd thy early youth,
Is left awhile to taſte the ſylvan gale,
As life treads downwards thro' time's narrow vale;
And if benignant heaven ſtill protect,
And tow'rds thy natal ſoil thy ſteps direct,
Haſte to the villa on the ſouthern ſide
Of ſweet Tremont, whoſe wavy waters glide
Near the fair ſummit of a lofty mount,
Where wild woods ſhade a ſoft meandering fount,
That gently rolls and forms a ſmall caſcade,
By nature's hand irregularly made;
The towering oaks and riſing hill tops vie
To ſhade the radiance of the weſtern ſky;
The ſloping lawns and flowery meads combine
To form the landſcape on a bold deſign;
The opening bay a winding river bounds,
And ſcatter'd iſles erect their verdant mounds;
The grey ey'd morn her ſtreaked pinions ſpreads,
And diſtant mountains rear their bluſhing heads;
The broad Atlantic's rolling tide between,
Heightens the grandeur of th' enchanting ſcene;
The whiten'd ſurges gently waſh the ſhore,
While ſilver rills run ſoftly rippling o'er.

The fragrant banks, whoſe native borders riſe
In beauteous foliage of a thouſand dyes;

The

The tufted flowers meet the cluſtering vine,
That wildly rambles o'er the conic pine;
The darkening cedars form the grotto's ſhade,
And greener willows fan the fertile glade;
A little alcove opes on either hand,
Where the tall larch and vivid limes aſcend;
The lengthen'd viſta widens through the dale,
Where ſportive flocks play o'er the gloſſy vale;
From hence we view along the watery way,
Great Bourbon's flag and ſtreaming pendants play.

In this retreat reſide thy happy friends,
Content and health benignant heaven lends;
A ſocial board, with frugal plenty crown'd,
A generous welcome ſmiles on all around;
The day glides on, and when the eve returns,
Fraternal love in every boſom burns;
Each virtue planted in the youthful breaſt,
The parents ſmile, in future proſpects bleſt.

Domeſtic peace, a conſcious upright mind,
Is honour, wealth, and every good combin'd:
Return, my ſon, for nothing elſe we need,
To ſee thee happy, would be bliſs indeed.

Milton, January 1, 1782.

To a patriotic Gentleman, who presented a small Book of Bark, requesting a POEM *might be written therein, on* PRIMITIVE SIMPLICITY.

ON the smooth papyrus of ancient times,
Nature's bright charms, I'd paint in simple rhymes;
The bliss superiour of those happy days,
When on the bark the bard inscrib'd his lays;
But, when immers'd amidst ten thousand cares,
Domestic duties, and some foreign fears;
When avocations of the social kind,
Engross the heart, and fill the busy mind,
Pegasus often does his aid refuse,
And sentiment will not assist the muse.

Thus circumstanc'd, I'll not indulge the pride,
To pick one flower from Parnassus side;
Much less attempt its summit to explore,
Though much I love Scamander's rippling shore;
I'll check my wish, and drop my humble wing,
Pleas'd with the laurels that for others spring:
Yet snatch a moment, when my friends command,
And point the period with a willing hand;
And if the lagging numbers slowly move,
I'll hope a pardon from the voice of love.
Critics may censure, but if candour frowns,
I'll quit the pen, and keep within the bounds,
The narrow bounds, prescrib'd to female life,
The gentle mistress, and the prudent wife:
Maternal precepts, drawn from sacred truth,
Shall warm the bosom of the list'ning youth;
While the kind mother acts her little part,
And stamps the tablet on the infant heart,

Each

Each fervent wish, I to my country lend,
And thus subscribe, the patriot's faithful friend.

SIMPLICITY.

DEEP in the bosom of old Time there stood,
Just on the margin of the sea green flood,
A virgin form, in lucid robes array'd,
Whose ebon tresses negligently play'd
In flowing ringlets, as the wavy main
Felt the soft breeze that fann'd the verdant plain;
While the young bluſh of innocence bespoke
Her innate worth in every graceful look;
Her meek ey'd aspect, modest and benign,
Evinc'd the fair one's origin divine;
Virtue, at once her ornament and shield,
And Truth the trident that the goddess held.

Beneath her reign, behold a happy race,
Who ne'er contested titles, gold, or place.
Ere commerce' whiten'd sails were wafted wide,
And every bosom caught the swelling pride
Of boundless wealth, surcharg'd with endless snares,
Exotic follies, and destructive cares;
Ere arts, or elegance, or taste refin'd,
And tempting luxury, assail'd mankind;
Their oaks and evergreens, and poplar shades,
In native beauty, rear'd their conic heads;
The purple tinge with golden hues inwrought,
In dappled forms, as sportive nature taught;
The silken foliage open'd through the mead,
And the clear font in wild meanders play'd;
Beside whose gentle murm'ring stream there stood
The humble hamlet, by the peasant trod,

Whose heart, unblacken'd by so mean a vice,
As lust of gold, or carking avarice;
No guilty bribes his whiten'd palm possess'd,
No dark suspicion lurk'd within his breast:
Love, concord, peace, and piety and truth,
Adorn'd grey hairs, and dignifi'd the youth;
There stingless pleasures crown'd the temp'rate feast,
And ruddy health, a constant welcome guest,
Fill'd up the cup, and smil'd at every board,
The friend and handmaid of her generous lord.

The rosy finger'd morn, and noontide ray,
The streaked twilight, or the evening grey,
Were pass'd alike in innocence and mirth,
No riot gendering slow but certain death;
Unclouded reason guided all their way,
And virtue's self sat innocently gay;
The winged hours serenely glided by,
'Till golden Phœbus deck'd the western sky;
And when enwrap'd in evening's sable vest,
And midnight shadows hush'd the world to rest,
On the fam'd ladder, whose extended bars,
From earth's low surface reach'd beyond the stars,
From orb to orb, thought reach'd the airy void,
Through widen'd space the busy mind employ'd,
While angel guards to watch his fate were given
Prelusive dreams anticipated heaven.

But ere the bird of morn had hail'd the day,
Or warbling songsters chirp'd their early lay,
The grateful heart its joyful matins rais'd,
And nature's God in morning anthems prais'd.

Thus happy that ideal golden age,
That lives descriptive in the poet's page;

But

But now, alas! in dark oblivion loſt,
The ſons of Adam know it to their coſt;
Since God forbad the mother of mankind
To taſte the fruit to which ſhe moſt inclin'd:
Her taſte ſo delicate, refin'd and nice,
That the exuberance ev'n of Paradiſe,
The graſſy banks beſide the blue caſcade,
The winding ſtream from Piſon's golden head,
The ſpicy groves on Gihon's lengthen'd ſide,
Hidekel's font, Aſſyria's blooming pride,
The fruits luxuriant on Euphrates' ſhores,
The rich profuſion that all Eden pours,
The ſhady dome, the roſy vaulted bower,
And nature deck'd with every fruit and flower,
Were inſufficient, rude, and incomplete,
For taſte ran wanton, and the fair muſt eat.

Since which the garden's cloſely lock'd by fate,
And flaming cherubs guard the eaſtern gate;
This globe is travers'd round from pole to pole,
And earth reſearch'd to find ſo rich a dole
As happineſs unmix'd;—the phantom flies,
No ſon of Eve has ever won the prize.

But neareſt thoſe, who neareſt nature live,
Deſpiſing all that wealth, or pow'r can give,
Or glitt'ring grandeur, whoſe falſe optics place
The *ſummum bonum* on the fraileſt baſe;
And if too near the threſhold of their door,
Pride blazes high, and clamours loud for more—
More ſhining pomp, more elegance and zeſt,
In all the wild variety of taſte;
Peace and contentment are refin'd away,
And worth, unblemiſh'd, is the villain's prey.

Eaſy

Eaſy the toil, and ſimple is the taſk,
That yields to man all nature bids him aſk;
And each improvement on the author's plan,
Adds new inquietudes to reſtleſs man.
As from ſimplicity he deviates,
Fancy, prolific, endleſs wants creates;
Creates new wiſhes, foreign to the ſoul,
Ten thouſand paſſions all the mind control;
So faſt they tread behind each other's heels
That ſome new image on the fancy ſteals;
Ere the young embrio half its form completes,
Some new vagary the old plan defeats;
Down comes the Gothic or Corinthian pile,
And the new viſta wears the Doric ſtile.
The finer arts depopulate and waſte,
And nations ſink by elegance and taſte:
Empires are from their lofty ſummits rent,
And kingdoms down to ſwift perdition ſent,
By ſoft, corrupt, refinements of the heart,
Wrought up to vice by each deceptive art.

Rome, the proud miſtreſs of the world, diſplays
A laſting proof of what my pen eſſays;
High wrought refinement—uſher'd in replete,
With all the ills that ſink a virtuous ſtate;
Their ſumptuary laws grown obſolete,
They, undiſmay'd, the patriot's frown could meet;
Their ſimple manners loſt—their cenſors dead,
Spruce *petit maitres* o'er the forum tread.

I weep thoſe days when gentle Maro ſung,
And ſweeteſt ſtrains bedeck'd the flatt'rer's tongue;
When ſo corrupt and ſo refin'd the times,
The muſe could ſtoop to gild a tyrant's crimes.

Then

Then paint and ſculpture, elegance and ſong,
Were the purſuits of all the buſy throng;
When ſilken commerce held the golden ſcales,
Empire was purchas'd at the public ſales:
No longer liv'd the ancient Roman pride,
Her virtue ſicken'd, and her glory di'd.

What blotted out the Carthaginian fame,
And left no traces but an empty name?—
Commerce! the ſource of every narrow vice,
And honour, barter'd at a trivial price.
By court intrigues, the Commonwealth's diſgrac'd,
Both ſuffetes and ſenators debas'd:
By ſoft refinement, and the love of gold,
Faction and ſtrife grew emulous and bold,
'Till reſtleſs Hanno urg'd his purpoſe on,
And Scipio's rival by his art's undone.

From age to age, ſince Hannibal's hard fate,
From Cæſar's annals to the modern date,
When Brunſwick's race ſits on the Britiſh throne,
And George's folly ſtains his grandſire's crown;
When taſte's improv'd by luxury high wrought,
And fancy craves what nature never taught;
Affronted virtue mounts her native ſkies,
And freedom's genius lifts her bloated eyes;
As late I ſaw, in ſable veſtments ſtand,
The weeping fair, on Britain's naked ſtrand.

The cloud capt hills, the echoing woods and dales,
(Where pious druids dreſs'd the hallow'd vales;
And wrote their miſſels on the birchen rind,
And chanted dirges with the hollow wind,)
Breathe murmuring ſighs o'er that ill fated iſle,
Wrapt in refinements both abſurd and vile.

Proud Thames deſerted—her commercial ports
Seiz'd and poſſeſs'd by hated foreign courts;
No more the lofty ſhips her marts ſupply,
The Nereids flap their watry wings and die:
Grey Neptune riſes from his oozy bed,
And ſhakes the ſea weed from his ſhaggy head;
He bids adieu to fair Britannia's ſhore,
The ſurge rebounds, and all the woodlands roar;
His courſe he bends towards the weſtern main,
The frowning Titans join the ſwelling train,
Meaſure the deep, and laſh the foaming ſea,
In haſte to hail the brave Columbia free:
Ocean rebounds, and earth reverberates,
And Heaven confirms the independent ſtates;
While time rolls on, and mighty kingdoms fail,
They, peace and freedom on their heirs entail,
'Till virtue ſinks, and in far diſtant times,
Dies in the vortex of European crimes.

Plymouth, October, 1779.

On

On the DEATH *of the Hon.* JOHN WINTHROP, *Esq. L. L. D.* HOLLISIAN PROFESSOR *of* MATHEMATICKS *and* NATURAL PHILOSOPHY, *at* HARVARD COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

Addreſſed to his LADY.

A SERAPH ſhot acroſs the plain,
The lucid form diſplay'd,
The ſtarry round he here explor'd,
And cry'd—"great Winthrop's dead."

Down through the planetary fields,
Where countleſs ſyſtems roll,
A Newton's glorious kindred ſhade,
Deſcends to meet his ſoul.

They through the trackleſs paths of light
Still wonder, and adore,
And mount towards the central ſource,
Of all creative power.

But lo! the ſons of Harvard weep,
And ſcience drops a tear,
Philoſophy, her favorite mourns,
And ſtoic ſouls revere.

The wrangling diſputant abaſh'd,
Adores great nature's God,
And zealouſly explores the path
Th' illuſtrious ſage has trod.

As life forſook his dying lids,
Faith view'd the glorious prize,

Yet

Yet nature dropt a friendly tear
Before he reach'd the ſkies.

Though death with "dewy fingers cold,"
Pervades the fainted brow,
Compaſſion mov'd the quivering lip,
And in a laſt adieu—

He his laſt ſanction to the truth,
To doubting ſceptics leaves.
While weeping friends deplore his loſs,
And ſad Honoria grieves;

He ſigh'd—"the ancient ſages grop'd
"Through error's mazy round,
"Through earth and air, to hell's abyſs,
"They ſought one cauſe profound—

"One Great Firſt Cauſe—in every form,
"In every ſtar they greet,
"From Woden's dark and dreary cave,
"To Jove's etherial ſeat.

"They ſnatch'd each feeble ray of light,
"And cheriſh'd to a flame,
"As nature in ten thouſand forms
"Spake one eternal name.

"Kind Heaven beheld a wandering world,
"With altars rear'd to fate,
"And condeſcended to reveal
"A pure, immortal ſtate.

"But clearer light in modern time
"Our wiſer youth has taught,
"Whatever Socrates might preach,
"Or gloomy Plato thought,

"Are

" Are but enthuſiaſtic dreams ;
" And ſuch, the perfect code,
" Seal'd by a meſſenger divine,
" The ſacred ſon of God.

" By fancy's ebullitions ſwell'd
" With philoſophic fume,
" Both Moſes and Saint Paul renounce,
" For evangelic Hume.

" Shall ſuch intelligence and thought
" As actuates a mind,
" Like reas'ning Locke, or pious Boyle,
" To Hades be conſign'd ?—

" No more to live—no more to think,
" But periſh as the brute ;
" This for the Chriſtian faith and hope,
" Ah ! what a ſubſtitute !——

" Witlings may ſport at every truth
" The ſacred page contains,
" And academic fools diſpute
" With mazy, muddled brains ;

" The word on Sinai's mount reveal'd
" Has demonſtrative proof,
" Nor leſs the condeſcending grace
" Of a redeemer's love."

An heavenly energy divine,
Retarded long his mind,
While Angels heard the dying trill
In aid to truth deſign'd.

The muſick of the ſpheres reſounds,
And haſten'd his delay,

A cherub

A cherub lower'd his golden wing
To waft him on his way.

He through a galaxy of light
By Newton's eye unſeen,
Beyond the teleſcopic view
Of weak ey'd mortal men,

Treads o'er the pavement of the ſkies,
And looking down ſurveys,
A thouſand tranſits gliding through
The vaſt etherial ſpace.

Venus may paſs the nether ſun,
And worlds revolving roll;
The great aſtronomer beholds
The author of the whole.

Huygens's little tubes thrown by,
And Graveſande's narrow ſcale,
To view the magnitude of plan,
An Angel's opticks fail.

Hail! bright, exalted, happy ſoul,
Diſrob'd of earth born clay,
Thine agile wing moves o'er the orbs
Through ſeas of liquid day.

But, hah!—the literary world
Laments the recent blow,
Beſide the yew grown cover'd tomb,
Long—virtue's tears will flow.

His kind perſuaſive voice allur'd
To learning's happy ſeat,
And truth and friendſhip both combin'd
To bleſs the lov'd retreat.

The liſtening youth hung on the lip
  Where ſoft inſtruction flow'd,
In every emulative breaſt
  The thirſt of knowledge glow'd.

Some at Apollo's ſhrine may bow,
  And aſk another name,
To fill the philoſophic chair
  And reach a Winthrop's fame;

But, oh! thou great all perfect ſource!
  Of knowledge, light, and truth,
Send in the prophet's flaming car,
  A guide to Harvard's youth.

L I N E S,

Written on the anniverſary of the death of Mr. C——W——, *an amiable and accompliſhed young gentleman, who died in* St. Lucar, 1785. *His reſignation, fortitude, and piety, witneſſed the excellence of that religion which ſupported him with dignity and calmneſs, and through many months of languid illneſs, reaſon juſtified to him the hope of the Chriſtian.*

Oh! lend a moment to a parent's grief,
As wounded nature aſks this kind relief!—

LONG have I trod o'er life's moſt brilliant ſtage,
Read its deceptive, viſionary page,
Its richeſt hope in rapture lifted high,
I now ſurvey with retroſpective eye.

Its brighteſt boon, oft my tranſported heart
In fancy hug'd—but time's inſidious dart
Check'd each fond wiſh—relentleſs ſwept away
As tender foliage in a froſty day,
Youth, vigour, friendſhip; and the ripening bloom
Of early genius, ſhrouds in C——s's tomb.

A youth juſt form'd, as if by heav'n deſign'd
To ſhew the virtues in a youthful mind;
His manners gentle, and his heart ſincere,
Mild his deportment—but to vice ſevere;
He aim'd alone at life's ſublimeſt end,
Roſe to the ſaint, and ſoften'd to the friend.
With manly grace, and piety ſerene,
Met the laſt foe with an unclouded mein.

A burning hectic's ſecret fire betray'd,
'Till yielding nature bow'd his languid head;

When

When ſtrangers' tears were ſprinkled o'er his grave,
From which no tears, nor virtue's ſelf could ſave.
Kind foreign hands have dreſs'd his ſacred urn,
While weeping friends in diſtant climates mourn;
No brother's foot the ſolemn dirge attends,
Yet innate worth commanded many friends;
The father mourns with many a heartfelt ſigh,
While to the grave bends the maternal eye;
Her buſy mind, too curious, would inquire,
Why was he lent—or why ſo ſoon expire?

Is it from life's beſt joys my heart to wean?
Or are ſeverer pangs behind the ſcene?—
Let me not aſk—but humbly bow my will,
And own my God, the God of mercy ſtill;
Adore and tremble at Jehovah's name,
Whoſe hand, omnific, ſtill ſupports my frame;
Obey each precept of his laws divine,
Nor at the darkeſt providence repine;
Though ſtrip'd of all earth calls its choiceſt ſtore,
Yet if upheld by all ſupporting power,
I'll calmly walk on to life's utmoſt verge,
And, undiſmay'd, approach the boundleſs marge,
Of that broad ſpace where mighty ſyſtems roll,
And radiant glories ſtrike the wondering ſoul.

Then may the youth whoſe ſoul benign on earth,
Breath'd truth and ſweetneſs from his early birth,
Deſcend a moment from the realms above,
Deputed thence a meſſenger of love,
To aid my faith, and catch the parting breath,
And waft my ſoul from the cold bed of death;
Lead the glad ſpirit through th' etherial ſea,
And ope the gates to an eternal day.

To an amiable FRIEND,

Mourning the DEATH *of an excellent* FATHER.

LET deep dejection hide her pallid face,
And from thy breaſt each painful image raſe;
Forbid thy lip to utter one complaint,
But view the glories of the riſing ſaint,
Ripe for a crown, and waiting the reward
Of watching long the vineyard of his Lord.*

The generous purpoſe of his zealous heart,
Truth to enforce, and knowledge to impart,
Inſures his welcome on the unknown ſhore
Where choirs of ſaints, and angel forms adore:
A ſeraph met him on the trackleſs way,
And ſtrung his harp to join the heavenly lay.

Complain no more of Death's extenſive power,
Whoſe ſceptre wafts us to ſome bliſsful ſhore,
Where the rough billows that roll o'er the head,
That ſhake the frame, and fill the mind with dread,
Are huſh'd in ſilence, and the ſoul ſerene
Looks back delighted on the cloſing ſcene.

Happy, thrice happy, that exalted mind,
Who, leaving earth and all its cares behind,
Has not a wiſh to ruffle or control
The equal temper of his tranquil ſoul—
Who, on a retroſpect, is ſafe within,
No private paſſion, nor a darling ſin,
Can check his hope, when death's inſatiate power
Stands hovering on the laſt deciſive hour.

This

* The gentleman alluded to, was a clergyman of diſtinguiſhed merit.

This dreaded tyrant throws his forky wand,
And mows down millions with reſiſtleſs hand ;
From his reſearch no ſceptred prince can hide,
Though deck'd in all the luxury of pride.

Not all the ſplendor of a Saladin,
Not thoſe who worſhip at Belona's ſhrine,
Not Cæſar's triumphs, or a Pompey's fame,
Nor all the heroes of Rome's boaſted name,
Could once evade, though e'er ſo wiſe or great,
The dreaded ſentence of reſiſtleſs fate,
Which ſtrips the laurel from the good and brave,
And ranks the monarch with the meaneſt ſlave.

Cohorts of old, and ſlaves of modern Rome,
Promiſcuouſly meet one common doom,
And drop as leaves in the autumnal blaſt,
While adamantine pens record the paſt ;
And every action ſtands diſclos'd on high,
Inſcrib'd on columns fix'd beyond the ſky ;
Each virtuous deed, and every baſe purſuit,
That dignifies the man, or marks the brute.

Not ſeas of tears diſarm the grizzly king,
And virtue only antidotes his ſting ;
The eaſtern monarch, or the Grecian ſage,
May bid defiance to death's wanton rage,
If inward peace inſures the glorious prize,
That crowns the victor at the grand aſſize ;
When pearls, nor gold, nor India's wealth obtains
Applauſe from him who o'er creation reigns.

Then weep no more, my friend, but all reſign'd,
Submit thy will to the eternal mind,

Who

Who watches o'er the movements of the juſt,
And will again reanimate the duſt.
Thy ſire commands—ſuppreſs the riſing ſigh—
He wipes the tear from thy too filial eye,
And bids thee contemplate a ſoul ſet free,
Juſt ſafe eſcap'd from life's tempeſtuous ſea.

Could my weak numbers, or my plaintive ſtrain,
Or ſofteſt ſympathy, relieve thy pain,
My willing heart its ready aid ſhould lend
To ſooth the ſorrows of my weeping friend.

Let gratitude—(beſt feeling of the heart)
Whoſe raptur'd ſmiles the higheſt joys impart,
Inſpire thy ſoul, and look abroad ſerene,
Survey all nature with a placid mein.

See early ſpring its ſwelling leaf expand,
Or ripening harveſts court the reaper's hand;
Autumnal cluſters pour their juices forth,
Or frowning winter blacken all the north;
Still let content and gratitude appear,
Through all the changes of the varying year;
Let not a wayward thought thy peace moleſt,
Or the leaſt murmur e'er eſcape thy breaſt:
Look round, behold the brighten'd landſcape gay,
The wavy poplars fan the verdant May,
The oaken tops are with the elm combin'd,
To weave a covert for the weary mind.

On every ſide the vary'd ſweets appear,
And ſpeak the power that marks the rolling year;
Pleas'd with the grot, extinguiſh'd every care,
Expand thy heart, and breathe a grateful prayer,

That

That when time's rapid car its courſe has run
A few more circuits round the central ſun,
Thy friends and mine from death's umbrageous womb,
May burſt the manſions of the darkſome tomb,
With us unite in friendſhips more ſublime,
And ſmile on all the ductile ſcenes of time.

FAITH, reach thy hand, and lead us o'er the deep,
While ſmiling Hope forbids we here ſhould weep.

The GENIUS *of* AMERICA *weeping the abſurd* FOLLIES *of the* DAY.—*October* 10, 1778.

"O TEMPORA! O MORES!"

BENEATH the lofty pine that ſhades the plain,
Where the blue mount o'erlooks the weſtern main,
I ſaw Columbia's weeping Genius ſtand,
A blacken'd ſcroll hung waving in her hand.

The penſive fair, in broken accents ſaid,
Shall freedom's cauſe by vice be thus betray'd?—
Behold the ſchedule that unfolds the crimes
And marks the manners of theſe modern times.
She ſigh'd and wept—the folly of the age,
The ſelfiſh paſſions, and the mad'ning rage
For pleaſure's ſoft debilitating charms,
Running full riot in cold avarice' arms;
Who graſps the dregs of baſe oppreſſive gains,
While luxury in high profuſion reigns.
Our country bleeds, and bleeds at every pore,
Yet gold's the deity whom all adore;
Except a few, whoſe probity of ſoul
No bribe could purchaſe, nor no fears control.
A choſen few, who dar'd to ſtem the tide
Of Britiſh vengeance in the pomp of pride,
When George's fleets with every ſail unfurl'd,
And by his hand the reeking dagger hurl'd,
The ſharpen'd ſteel, the angry furies held,
And Albion's offſpring ſtrew'd the purple field
With kindred blood, warm from his brother's veins,
The crimſon flood each field and village ſtains;

Yet

Yet back recoil'd the reeking bloody hilt,
And ſlaughter'd millions mark'd the tyrant's guilt.

But 'midſt the carnage the weak monarch made,
Stern bending down his awful grandſire's ſhade,
Beſpoke the pupil of the Scottiſh thane,
"Why fully thus the glories of my reign?
"The weſtern world oft for my houſe has bled,
"And Brunſwick's friends lie mingled with the dead;
"In yon fair fields of glory and renown,
"Now independent of thy trembling crown;
"The luſtre of thy diadem is fled,
"The brighteſt jewel that adorn'd thy head;
"America—no more ſupports thy reign,
"Nor freedom will forgive her martyrs ſlain.

"As I ſhot down acroſs th' empurpled plains,
"Whole cities burn'd, and Vulcan forg'd new chains.
"Yet dying patriots claſp'd the darling ſon,
"And bid him gird the warlike helmet on.
"The cold lip quiver'd on the blood ſtain'd ground,
"The ſpirit riſing from the ghaſtly wound,
"The hero ſob'd—the glorious work complete,
"And Britain's barbarous policy defeat;
"'Tis heav'n commands, and freedom is the prize,
"Adieu, my ſon—death ſeals thy father's eyes."

The ſtern majeſtic form about to riſe,
The guardian goddeſs met him from the ſkies;
"'Tis juſt, ſhe cry'd—I urg'd the battle on,"
And, pointing down—"ſee, there the trophies won,
"While they believ'd heav'n's uncontrol'd decree,
"That virtue only made them brave and free."

The

The trump of war from ſhore to ſhore reſounds,
And the ſhrill echo o'er the vale rebounds;
The diſtant nations hear the dread alarm,
Enkindled Europe for the conflict arm;
The Gallic powers, the weſtern peaſants join,
And diſtant legions form in freedom's line;
America is hail'd from ſea to ſea,
Sits independent, glorious, and free;
Propitious heaven approv'd, and ſmil'd benign,
And guards of angels aided her deſign;
While ſtill her ſenate, vigilant and wiſe,
Spreads wide her fame, and lifts her to the ſkies.

But he who holds the univerſal chain
Of all events, his ſyſtem will maintain;
He through the whole creation has decreed,
Effects muſt follow as our actions lead;
All nature ſhews that heaven ne'er deſign'd,
Spite of themſelves, to ſave and bleſs mankind.
The friendly genius lifted ſlow her veil,
And ſtill hid half the melancholy tale—
When, lo! ſhe ſigh'd, the happy proſpect dies,
Guilt has provok'd the vengeance of the ſkies;
As wealth pour'd in from every diſtant ſhore,
The gaudy lap of luxury ran o'er;
The blacken'd paſſions all at once let looſe,
And rampant crimes ſcarce aſk'd for an excuſe.

So diſſolute—yet ſo polite the town,
Like Hogarth's days, the world's turn'd upſide down;
Old Juvenal, who cenſur'd former crimes,
Or Churchill's pen, in more ſatiric rhymes,
Or crabbed Swift, in yet a rougher ſtile,
Might laſh the vices of a venal iſle;

If

If ſermons, ſatires, or the law of heaven,
(Though it again from Sinai's mount were given,)
Should all combine to cenſure modiſh vice,
It can't be wrong, when faſhion ſanctifies.

Hogarth *might* paint, and Churchill laſh the times,
Compar'd with moderns, modeſt were their crimes;
Not Swift *himſelf* could now defame the age,
Truth might be told in each ſarcaſtic page;
Whoe'er delights to ſhew mankind abſurd,
The life in vogue may ample room afford.*

The early creed of liſping girls and boys,
Is taſte, high life, and pleaſure's guilty joys;
The modiſh ſtile the heedleſs parent taught,
And ſins run rank, from levity of thought;
Ere the big cloud that ſhook the north retires,
Each generous movement of the ſoul expires;
All public faith, and private juſtice dead,
And patriot zeal by patriots betray'd;
While hot bed plants of yeſterday ſhoot up,
Erect their heads, and reach the cedar's top.

Thankleſs to heaven, and to the men ingrate,
Who ventur'd all to ſave a ſinking ſtate;
Who kept the ſhatter'd bark, and ſtood the deck,
When timid helmſmen left her as a wreck.
Thoſe godlike men, thoſe lovers of mankind,
Have nought to retroſpect that pains the mind;

Placid

* This piece was written when a moſt remarkable depravity of manners pervaded the cities of the United States, in conſequence of a ſtate of war; a relaxation of government; the ſudden acquiſition of fortune; a depreciating currency; and a new intercourſe with foreign nations.

Placid they move amidſt an heedleſs band,
And ſigh in ſilence o'er a guilty land.

But when old Time is ſo decrepid grown,
His worn out car no more will bear him on,
When Fame throws by her faithleſs tinkling tube
That carol'd falſehoods round the liſt'ning globe,
The evergreens on yonder ether plains,
Eternal flouriſh to reward their pains.

Thus truth exhibits virtue in an age,
When vice, unbluſhing, ſtalk'd acroſs the ſtage,
And ſtar'd around with hideous prowling eyes,
To catch the heedleſs witling as he flies;
The diſputant, who enters on the liſt,
To foil a Newton, or to win at whiſt.
He lives a ſceptic, if you take his word,
Thinks 'tis heroic to deny his God,
Or to diſpute his providential care,
Deride his precepts, or to ſcoff at prayer.
His coat, his creed, his faith and genius too,
Are moderniz'd, as faſhion forms the cue;
Prompt and alert, with erudition fraught,
Than Locke, or Boyle, in ethics better taught;
He ſwears the *taſte* the *bon ton* of the times,
By moraliſts can ne'er be conſtru'd crimes;
Moſt modern writers are much better bred,
Voltaire and Hoyle, the authors he has read,
Diſcard ſuch antique, odd ideas of truth,
Such muſty rules for regulating youth.

Lord Bolingbroke, among the wits a toaſt,
And Mandeville, the ſceptic's empty boaſt,
Reaſon ſo clear, that e'en their pigmy race
Who ſwarm and cluſter in each public place,

With

With ſcientific brow can demonſtrate,
Whate'er the pious ſage or prieſt may prate,
Virtue is an enthuſiaſtic dream,
Reveal'd religion, a long worn out theme.

At bacchanalian feaſts, it is the mode
To pour libations to the red ey'd God,
'Till penetration ſo out runs his ſenſe,
That the *arcana* of omnipotence,
Brought to the reas'ner's ſuperficial teſt,
The Chriſtian code becomes his wanton jeſt.
Scarce any decent principles remain,
A fool's cap, perch'd on folly's feather'd brain,
Is the learn'd ſignal for the warm debate
On Voltaire's creed—or the decrees of *fate*;
'Till graceful * * ſo improves the plan,
The deiſt bluſhes at his bolder ſtrain;
His flowing ſtile, and eaſy periods ſuch,
His influence ſinks, becauſe he doubts too much.
This ſmooth romantic bard, from eaſt to weſt,
Has conjur'd up each ſceptical proteſt
'Gainſt all religion—ev'n the moſt ſublime,
Oral or wrote—of late or modern time.
All hope renounc'd of an immortal ſtate,
By rote his pupils ſyllogiſms prate—
Annihilation diſſipates all fear,
We can but ſuffer—and enjoy while here.

As *ignis fatuus* floats from lake to bog,
The vapor plays in peſtilential fog,
Sparkles and ſinks in the dark marſhy tomb,
As modern wits in metaphyſic fume.

Yet they aſſume a ſelf important air,
Or to confound, or proſelyte the fair,

Who

Who no ideas have of other heaven,
If dreſs, parade, and a gallant is given;
Who rail aloud 'gainſt puritanic rules,
And learn their morals in deiſtic ſchools;
Who prattle nonſenſe with the half fledg'd beau,
Can cog the die, and raffle high or low;
In folly's lap, by childiſh paſſions toſs'd,
On vanity's deluſive ſhallow coaſt;
The rippling ſurface hides the deep abyſs,
That gapes deſtruction, while the hydra's hiſs,
Unheard as pleaſure's faſcinating ſong,
In gales perfum'd, the triflers hurl along.
While wide ſpread ruin ſtalks from door to door,
Famine and ſword ſtill threat'ning to devour,
How many dance on diſſipation's wing,
No pen can paint, nor can the poet ſing.

Profoundly learn'd, inveſtigating truth,
And thus thrown off the ſhackles of his youth,
He's wiſeſt ſure who makes the moſt of life,
Prefers a miſtreſs to a ſober wife;
The coxcomb laughs, and revels life away,
While gaming high's the buſineſs of the day;
Pleaſure ſhall dance in every feſtive bowl,
The *Brute's* ſecure—the *Man* has not a ſoul.

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